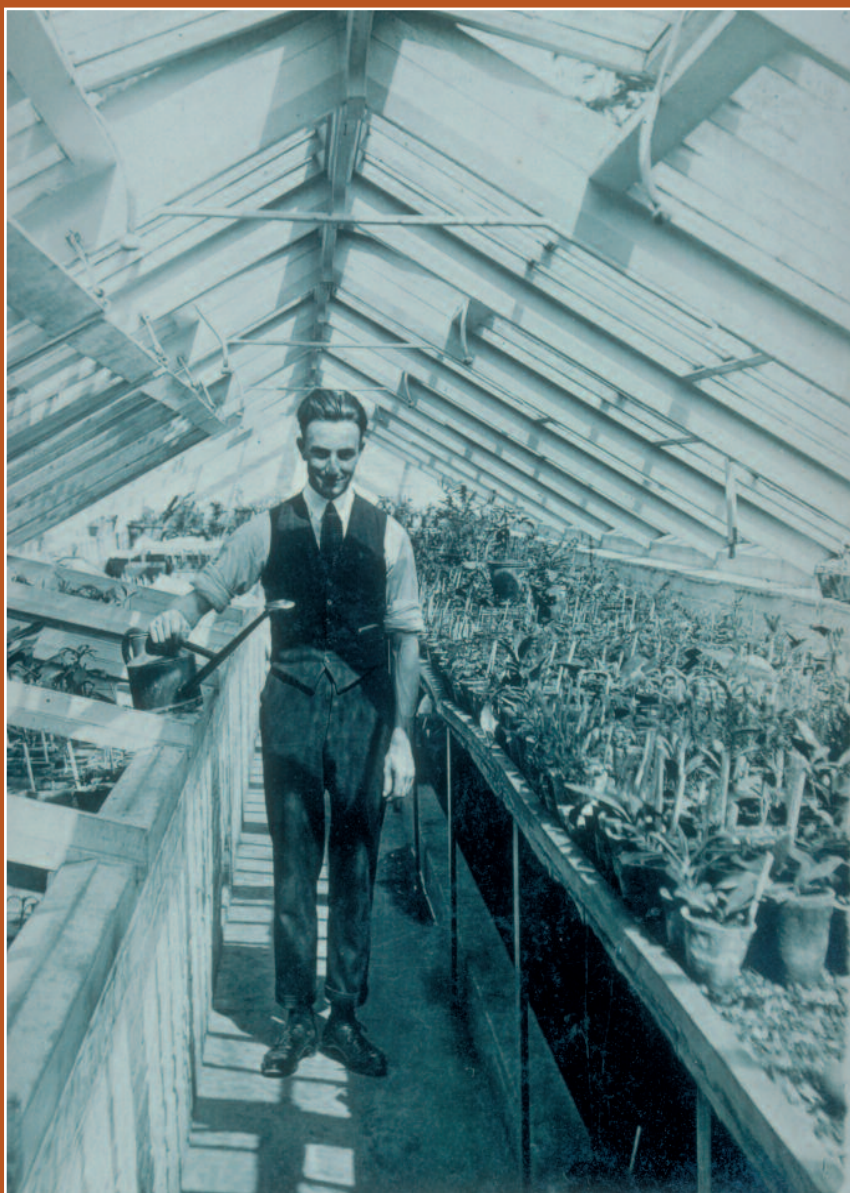


Local History News

Number 121 Autumn 2016

www.balh.org.uk



Magazine of the British Association for Local History

AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS

- *To encourage research and publication*

One or more certificates may be awarded each year for published work presenting sound original research in well-written form. To be eligible a piece of work, of any length, must appear in a journal, newsletter or similar publication produced by a local voluntary body, which is sent to Dr Sarah Rose the Reviews Editor for review or listing. All relevant material sent to the Reviews Editor is automatically considered, and a short-list prepared for the Awards Panel.

- *To recognise other kinds of personal achievement*

Up to six awards may be made each year as a means of publicly honouring local historians who have made outstanding and significant **voluntary** contributions to the subject in their own areas. The purpose of this award is to identify and publicise good practice in whatever form it appears. Nominations must be made on the form available from the Awards Secretary, on our website at www.balh.co.uk/awards.php or in the August issue of *Local History News*

- *To encourage societies to share information locally*

An annual award for newsletters used by local societies to correspond with their members and other interested readers. Newsletters can be of any length, published at any regular interval, in any style, by any printing method. The contents, and the clarity of communication, are the key factors rather than the glossiness of production. All newsletters sent to the Reviews Editor will be considered for this award, the final decision for which lies with the Publications Committee of the BALH.

Awards are presented at the Local History Day each June

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Cover Picture

H W Sayer, Sub-Foreman of the Temperate House Pits at Kew, propagating plants May 1924
© Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew archive; see article p 10

Local History News

magazine of the British Association for Local History

ISBN 0969 3521

Local History News
edited by Jane Howells
published by the British Association for Local History
Chester House, 68 Chestergate, Macclesfield SK11 6DY mail@balh.org.uk
www.balh.org.uk

printed by Salisbury Printing Company Ltd, Greencroft St, Salisbury SP1 1JF

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 Chester House, 68 Chestergate, Macclesfield SK11 6DY 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 Sarah Rose, Department of History, Bowland College, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YT. If you have a newly published work, either as an individual or a society, please send her a copy for listing and possible review.

**mail@balh.org.uk is the email address
for all parts of the Association,
messages are forwarded promptly to the right person**

*Views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the
British Association for Local History.*

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Centre pages

Events • two books of interest • subscriptions for 2017

A48

Alan Crosby

Driving along the A48 from Gloucester to Chepstow in August, I was intrigued by the character of a road which, before the building of the M50/A449 past Ross on Wye, and the M5/M4/M48 and the Severn bridges, was one of the great arteries of the kingdom. Like other such routes – the A38 from Worcester to Gloucester, or what used to be the A41 from Banbury to Warwick are good examples – it retains many features associated with the pioneering age of mass motoring in the late '30s and especially the 1950s and early '60s.

The alignment is generally well below the standards expected in more recent times. When motor traffic began to increase, local authorities and central government were rarely enthusiastic about building on new alignments. So on the A48, as elsewhere, widening was often implemented using the existing ancient alignment, with long bends and sharp curves, and little or no attempt to ease gradients. In the '50s that didn't matter all that much, but today, when cars are so much more numerous, and faster, it means a 50mph limit for most of the route.

The tell-tale signs of 1950s' road design can be seen in other ways. For considerable distances the carriageway is wide, but with only one lane in each direction ... faint lines and fading paint in the tarmac reveal the former existence of three lanes, that standard device of the post-war period which allowed overtaking in either direction in the central lane. Goodness, I remember some alarming near misses from my childhood, because of that! The three-lane sections have now been removed almost everywhere (many of us lament that they could easily have been adapted for uni-directional overtaking but unfortunately rarely were).

Another very obvious feature of these roads is the very short stretches of dual carriageway on the crest of hills – the A48 has an exceptional number of these. Driving from the A40 outside Gloucester to Chepstow on a Saturday morning, I did not encounter a single lorry in 28 miles, but sixty years ago the road was

crowded with them, heading to or from the industrial areas of South Wales and the Midlands. Overtaking was extremely difficult, so the odd quarter mile stretches of dual carriageway on hilltops meant that at least a few cars might pass wagons slowed to a crawl. This time I used them to pass the occasional learner driver or holiday motorist, and in one instance what sixty years ago might have been a called a charabanc, but there was very little traffic.

Stretches of the road have the slightly forlorn appearance which many such routes share. In days of yore they were arteries of trade and commerce, reflected in the remarkable number of pubs, hotels and garages, service stations and car repair places which is a feature of the old trunk road network. Many of these, of course, have closed and are empty and abandoned. The loss of the passing trade, the greater reliability of cars, larger fuel tanks and better fuel consumption mean that the business is no longer there.

Lydney, metropolis of the west bank of the Severn, is bypassed by a modern road, the only major diversion away from the old route. But a succession of other places – Minsterworth, Westbury on Severn, Blakeney, Alvington, and especially Newnham – still have many reminders of the prosperity and business which an arterial road and a thriving commercial waterway, the River Severn, once brought. Until 1935 Newnham and Westbury were small urban districts, and the former – with its unexpected impressive and elegant three-storey Georgian buildings, spacious green-cum-market place, imposing clock tower and shops – still has a pronounced urban quality, though the Victoria Hotel at the top of the High Street is boarded up.

And along the road there are glimpses, and sometimes splendid views, of the majestic brown waters of the Severn, rolling away to the Bristol Channel. To the north-west are the densely wooded fringes of the Forest of Dean. A lovely road if you aren't in a hurry, and every mile displays its history.

BALH's new president

Caroline Barron

It is a great honour to have been invited to be President of BALH in succession to the distinguished and much-loved David Hey, and I much look forward to learning more about the work of the Association and to helping to play a part in encouraging the study of local history.

I am a medieval historian and taught for all my working life, first at Bedford College and then at the merged Royal Holloway and Bedford New College. The focus of my research has been the study of the city of London in the medieval period, which is, of course, local history writ large. Although the city had access to the royal court at Westminster, and the Londoners were in touch with alien merchants, and some of them were extremely wealthy, yet the majority of Londoners in the medieval period were men and women of modest means who were immigrants from elsewhere in England and retained many of their local loyalties and connections. The business that occupied the Court of Aldermen in the fifteenth century was much the same as that in any rural manor or borough court: control of food quality and prices, punishment of petty criminals, settlement of disputes and the regulation of sexual behaviour. On occasion the London aldermen were, indeed, taken up with matters of national importance, but their main concerns were local to the city of London and its inhabitants.

Now that London is so large its study tends to be fragmented between many local societies. The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society has over fifty affiliated local society members ranging from the Cuffley Industrial Heritage Society in the north to the Orpington and District Archaeological Society in the south, and from the Spelthorne Archaeology and Local History Group in the west to the Chadwell Heath Historical Society in the east. The local society with which I am most closely associated is the Camden History Society which, I am proud to record, consistently wins prizes for the quality of its Review and other publications.

My mother was an American from Boston (but the family roots were in Amherst, Mass) and



Americans tend to begin a conversation not, as in England, with reference to the weather but with the question 'Where are you from?' My answer to that would be 'London' since, although I was born in Newcastle Emlyn in Wales that was a war-time aberration. It was in London that I was brought up, where I went to school and where I now live. My English grandfather was born in Barton on Humber in North Lincolnshire, the son of the vicar, and I have a strong interest in the work there of the Barton Civic Society. My husband's mother came from St Just near Land's End and, as a family, we spent many holidays there and I cherish the modest landscape of West Penwith, and go there as often as I can.

Now, as President of BALH I look forward to getting to know more of the history of many other parts of England and to meeting members of BALH who do so much to recover the history of the local communities of the past.

Boy Scouts and World War I in Britain

Allen Warren

In the *Times History of the War*, a chapter is devoted to the contribution made by the Boy Scouts to the civilian war effort. A few years before in 1919, the Fisher Education Act made provision for the creation of camping grounds for education and training. It was popularly known as the Boy Scout clause. Both examples show how quickly the Boy Scouts had become part of the civic and social landscape in town and country. Developing rapidly as a training scheme for boys, after the publication of *Scouting for Boys* in early 1908, written by Robert Baden-Powell, maverick military hero of the siege of Mafeking nine years before, it is often quoted as having one hundred thousand members by 1910. The movement and its founder have been much argued over by historians and biographers ever since.

One aspect less commented upon is the speed with which it was accepted as part of the social neighbourhood across much of the United Kingdom. This stretched from the highest level of royal endorsement by Edward VII in 1909 and the granting of a Royal Charter, to local enthusiasm and sometimes nervousness by military, moral and religious groups in cities, towns and villages. From August 1914 the role of the Boy Scouts and later the Girl Guides was a significant factor in the civilian defence of Britain. It is revealing that as early as the 12th August 1914 the War Office issued an instruction that the wearing of a Scout hat or the *fleur de lys* badge was proof of identity that the person was an authorised civilian figure engaged in war work.

In understanding this status, it is important to realise that civic life before 1914 was on the streets as well as in the committee room; processions, parades, shows, carnivals and field exercises were almost weekly events attracting large crowds and usually ending with some sort of civic church service. Their purposes were varied, but more commonly than not they were fund raising exercises, very often in aid of the local hospital. Boy Scouts with their picturesque uniforms and their commitment to civic service were quickly a part of these rituals. Their identity locally was very clear by 1914, even if other bodies were nervous at a national level at this potential 'cuckoo in the nest'.

What did this mean in practice? What follows is a cross-section drawn from Bristol and the neighbouring counties from the British Newspaper Archive. In a war that lasted over four years there was inevitably an ebb and flow in terms of Boy Scout volunteering from the immediate crisis from August 1914 until the war had dug in by 1915, through the period of long drawn out attrition on the home front and concluding with the extreme shortages of early 1918.

On the outbreak of war, the Scout leadership in Bristol summoned all its leaders and boys over 16 to a meeting to commit to the war effort at home. By December, the *Western Daily Press* reported that 58 officers and 200 Scouts had volunteered, whilst in the city Scouts had acted as signallers on the Bristol Channel coast, as cyclists and messengers for the Red Cross, thirty were guarding tunnels, bridges and depots, while others were hospital orderlies or engaged in house to house collections as part, for instance, of Chocolate Day to provide chocolate for the troops.

In the much smaller town of Taunton the response was remarkable. Throughout August 1914, during the most paranoid period of the war, Scouts provided security for bridges, depots, electricity supplies and other 'threatened' facilities. At the same time, the first true invasion of the war, the fleeing Belgian refugees, of whom there were tens of thousands across the country, were being accommodated in the town and for the next four years the Scouts provided the infrastructure and organisation for their reception, including some of the boys forming Belgian Scout patrols. In addition, the Scouts established a recreation hut in the town for soldiers based in the neighbouring barracks. At the same time the town's troops provided 24 boy volunteers for the Scout national coast-watching service on the Cornish coast, following the bombardment of Scarborough and Whitby. More locally, School Attendance Committees recognised absence from school on war work as a legitimate excuse. Individual Scouts could gain the War Service Badge for 28 days of war work.

Once the immediate crisis at home abated Scouts, and increasingly Girl Guides, were

part of the wider civilian engagement, raising funds for the treatment of the war injured, or for parcels for prisoners of war from the Somerset Light Infantry, or collecting newspaper and bottles for recycling, edible waste for pig swill, wild herbs for medicines, acorns for gas mask charcoal, or blackberries for jams. In early 1916 security functions returned through the fear of Zeppelin attacks and Bristol Scouts were charged with extinguishing the street lights in that event. Food shortages became severe from 1917. In Bath Scouts circulated advice from the city authorities about reducing meat consumption, eggs were collected widely to help supplies at the local hospitals, and allotments were dug for others to grow food.

There could be problems too. The coast-watching duties were in the event not so exciting, once the threat of immediate invasion had past. Scouts, although supervised by the local coast guards, got homesick, bored or got into mischief. School Attendance Committees became concerned about the boys' education. But there were lighter sides too. In Taunton, injured soldiers taught local Girl Guides pistol shooting, resulting in the girls defeating a group of boys from the Church Lads Brigade.

These contributions continued until the Armistice and for some time after and were widely recognised. But there was a longer term impact on both the Scouts and the Guides. The war had a significant impact on women and girls in assuming responsibilities of the men on active service. In the Scouts many women assumed the role of Scoutmaster or Cub mistress in the new section for younger boys, formally founded in 1916. Also from 1916, the Girl Guide movement expanded rapidly and was to do so throughout the 1920s with a strong emphasis on camping, the study of nature and service. Similarly, with Scout troops denuded of adult leaders, responsibilities fell on the older Scouts.

From 1916, even though the war's outcome could not be assured, debate about the possible post-war world was widespread. Spontaneously, patrol leaders' conferences of Scouts were held to discuss the future of the Scout movement. Not obviously politically radical, they nevertheless played their part in the wider reflections of how such a terrible war had come about, and how it must never happen again. In the Scout and Guide movements this had three significant aspects. First, the contribution to the war effort at home significantly reduced the pre-war anxieties by other bodies nationally that Scouts were a militaristic movement and that they had no religious or moral fundamentals. Secondly, that

as already international movements, Scouting and Guiding provided an additional vehicle for national reconciliation and global mutual understanding. Thirdly, that somehow the war was the consequence of an unbalanced urban western civilisation and that Scouting and Guiding were an antidote to that through global outdoor education, training and personal development within a new 'League of Nations of Youth'.

A note on sources

Those wishing to research the history of the Scout and Guide movements in their own localities will find invaluable help from The British Newspaper Archive - a website source for a rapidly expanding number of local newspapers from the eighteenth century up to the middle of the twentieth. It is accessible freely in some larger local authority libraries or on an individual subscription basis. The Scout and Guide Associations (see separate web sites) have archive and heritage departments containing national and some local records, as well as the 'office papers' of Lord Baden-Powell. Some County and District Record Offices may have locally deposited material. The chapter in the *Times History of the War* will be found in Vol. XVII pp145-180.

Dr Allen Warren is an honorary research fellow of the University of York, having previously been Head of the History Department and Provost of Vanbrugh College.

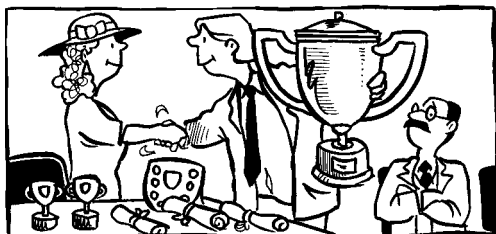
For a list of First World War themed research guides see <http://www.balhh.org.uk/education/local-history-and-the-first-world-war/resources-from-balhh>



Guarding a Railway Bridge

© The Scout Association, Heritage Department
reproduced with permission.

AWARDS



Frank Cowin personifies local history on the Isle of Man. A native Manxman, Frank grew up, was educated, trained and followed his career on the island. In his childhood during the years of the Second World War he lived in one of the few boarding houses on Douglas Promenade not requisitioned, though was of course witness to the impact of the times. His National Service was in the Royal Air Force and included a year spent in Germany.



Frank Cowin receiving his award certificate from Professor Claire Cross, Vice President of BALH at Local History Day in London, June 2016

As a professional Chartered Surveyor, Frank Cowin FRICS worked on many and varied projects, and served on a number of Manx Government Committees concerned with buildings and the environment. Since his retirement his skills and interests have expanded in diverse directions with, as one of his referees puts it, 'the eyes to see and the memory (to envy!) to fit people and places into their context both in terms of the island's landscape and the wider British Isles'.

Frank has been a member of the Isle of Man Natural History & Antiquarian Society for over 40 years, and recently completed his third term as President. His involvement with this and other groups including the Victorian, Family History, Methodist and Philatelic Societies has been a channel with which to share his knowledge and commitment for Manx history. He has contributed many articles for the *Proceedings* of IOMNHAS, has

An inspirational mentor to generations

Jane Howells

Obverse of the centenary medal for IOMNHAS, 1979, designed by Frank Cowin and cast by the Royal Mint.



written books celebrating the history and heritage of Douglas, and been involved with, for example, the production of videos on Manx Mines and Minerals.

He is known for spreading the word about Manx history by both talks and walks on subjects from churches and chapels and their dedications, to industrial archaeology and vernacular buildings, to individuals such as Nelson's Manx sailors, including his right-hand man Captain Quilliam. Much of the initial work undertaken to promote the Great Laxey Wheel and the Mines Trail around it, both much enjoyed by residents and visitors alike, was due to his efforts.

Frank Cowin has encouraged the involvement of younger people through the Duke of Edinburgh's Gold Award Scheme, and was one of those instrumental in establishing a Blue Badge guiding programme on the island, going on to par-



Frank Cowin at Maughold parish church, IoM, with some of the early carved stones

ticipate in the training originally via Liverpool University's Continuing Education Department. In both cases, these efforts contribute to ensuring the future of local history on the Isle of Man. Frank received 'Reih Bleeaney Vanannan' in 2002. This is an annual award made on behalf of the Manx nation for outstanding contribution to the culture and heritage of the Isle of Man.

He is described as 'a role model for local historians'; he is held in great respect and noted for his generosity of time, knowledge and enthusiasm.

with thanks to Frank Cowin, Clare Bryan, Patricia Newton and Miranda Fargher

An Ipswich half-timbered house on Cox Lane

Joanna Mattingly and Lisa Psarianos

A watercolour of a half-timbered house on Cox Lane painted by Howard Penton in the 1900s turned up in a Falmouth bookshop some years ago. What drew me to it was the ornate Gothic corner or dragon post which supported its double jetty; a type also associated with church houses.¹ This post 'was richly panelled with sunk tracery below the cap, and



the bracket above the cap had similar tracery, the spandrels being carved with Gothic flourishes. The cap had a cresting of Tudor flower ornament and beneath the abacus was a hollow cusped soffit. The lower part had been cut away and a stone base inserted'.²

Comparable and more figurative late medieval examples include Bury St Edmunds (x3), Eye, Fressingfield, Glemsford, Ipswich (x4), Lavenham, Needham Market, Stoke by Nayland, Suffolk, Alfriston, Sussex, Coventry, Gloucester, Shrewsbury, and York (*Images of England* web-site).

A photograph in a BALH publication eventually solved the mystery showing that the house once fronted Carr Street, Ipswich.³ The two upper floors each had seven rooms, 'all opening into each other and approached by two extremely narrow and angular staircases'. Described as 'a complicated catacombe that brought to mind Mr Pickwick's muddle with rooms at another Ipswich premises, the Great White Horse Hotel', it was dismantled in 1907 so that Ipswich Cooperative Society could expand its premises. Howard Penton's watercolour is either dated '08, just after removal, or '05. The earlier date appears on some other Penton postcards of Ipswich published by the Ancient House Press.



However this was not the end of the story. In 1908 the house was exhibited at the Franco-British Exhibition, White City presumably by Mr Harris the builder who had purchased it for £75 at auction. This 'fine example of half timber construction' caught the eye of Lord Wimborne of Ashby St Ledgers, Northamptonshire. Wimborne's architect - Lutyens - protested, but could not prevent Ashby St Ledgers' 17th-century Manor House acquiring its incongruous c.1500 wing.⁴

1. Joanna Mattingly, 'Built to last? The rise and fall of the church house', *The Local Historian*, vol. 42, 2012, pp.107-118.

2. Frank Grace, *The Late Victorian Town* (Phillimore/BALH, 1992), p. 61.

3. Grace, p.61 for rest of paragraph.

4. flickr images; Ashby St Ledgers Manor (which sold recently for £5 million) information from Blue Badge Guide at 2016 Ipswich BALH National conference.

The watercolour is now at Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich.

*See back cover for the water colour
(in colour)*

Home and Away: Discovering the gardeners of the Empire in the archive at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Louise Clarke

The archive collection at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew houses over 7million pieces of paper relating to the history of the Gardens. As a world leading scientific research institution this includes papers relating to Kew's scientific endeavours as well as manuscripts relating to Kew's most famous attractions such as the Palm House and Pagoda. Amongst those papers are also historic staff files and other records that show the various jobs held by Kew's gardening and botanical staff. These staff records form an invaluable family history resource and the archive often receives enquiries from members of the public interested in fleshing out their family trees. However, these records offer much more than family history information, they also show us how the people of Kew played their part in the British Empire, with documents revealing how Kew recommended its staff for posts in botanical stations and gardens across the Empire.

In the *Annual Report* of 1877, Kew's Director, Joseph Hooker, referred to Kew as the 'botanical headquarters of the British Empire'. At this time 'Kew played an influential role in advising the government on which newly discovered plants could be economically useful. It set up botanic gardens in the colonies to help it to translocate plants, such as rubber, cinchona (the source of quinine), coffee, tea and breadfruit.¹ To aid in this process Kew recommended its own staff for work in the colonies.

This opportunity to travel paints an interesting picture of the lives of many Kew trained gardeners, whose experiences up until that point were often embedded in British gardens. A typical staff file within the archive includes an application form and original letters of recommendation. From these we often see a great mobility across Britain as candidates sought

work in a variety of gardens to equip themselves with the range of horticultural and botanical skills needed to succeed at Kew. Once at Kew, gardeners were encouraged to attend lectures on a variety of different subjects, from Elementary Physics and Chemistry to Geographical and Economic Botany. Those with the greatest aptitude would often see movement up in the ranks, indeed Charles Henry Hubbard, Kew's Deputy Director in



The Palmetum at the Royal Botanic Garden, Calcutta

1965 had started his Kew career as an improved gardener 45 years earlier, or their academic pursuits would make them suitable for recommendation by Kew for gardeners' posts in the colonies.

In 1870 *The Times* stated that 'there are 50 men in different parts of India in government and private employ engaged in cultivating tea, cinchona and cotton who have been trained at Kew'² and two particular volumes within the archive collection detail the recommendation of gardeners for such roles in India.³ Printed notices within these volumes demonstrate that there were benefits for those willing to take on work in India: the 'Revised Conditions of Appointment of Gardeners for Service in India, 1898' states that the candidate will have

free second-class passage to India and, after their original three years' engagement, a free passage back to England. Free quarters would also be given to candidates and an allowance for clothing. Further documents reveal that these terms were negotiated by Kew staff, with Assistant Curator William Watson ensuring that the minimum term of employment remained at 3 years at a time when the Indian Government were proposing the introduction of a 5 year minimum and the removal of the clothing allowance, thus keeping the vacancies appealing and worthwhile to Kew staff.⁴

One particular example of a successful Kew gardener out in India is the case of A E P Griessen who, at age 23, moved to India in 1898 and remained there long past his initial three year contract. During his working life he had the privilege of working at the Taj Mahal and other gardens in Agra. His staff papers show that he was born in England, but his experience was built up in France at horticulture establishments in Versailles and Neuilly. Through Griessen's references we see that he was adept at working under glass and that he was a good propagator, skills that obviously had benefitted him at Kew as at the time of his departure he had risen to the rank of Sub-Foreman. Correspondence from the India Office details Griessen's £20 clothing allowance and confirmation of his fare on the P&O SS *Malta* on 9 December 1898.⁵ Further to these volumes, our Directors' Correspondence series can also be consulted to find out more about Griessen. A letter from David Prain, Director of the Calcutta Botanic Garden to William Thistelton-Dyer, Director of Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, dated 21 January 1900 details that in April that year the Government of the North Western Provinces wished a man for Agra and as such Griessen was to go to Lucknow to learn something of conditions in the North Western Provinces.⁶ A letter from Griessen to David Prain (now Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew), written from Delhi on 15 December 1913, shows that Griessen was successful both professionally and personally out in India, referring to his time in Agra, changes in Delhi and the health of his wife and child. Griessen also thinks that young 'Kewites' would benefit from experience in Delhi and regrets that it is not possible to post some there.⁷

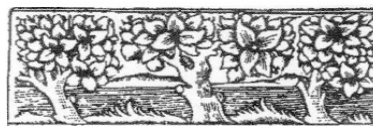
Each application within the 'Calcutta' volume is unique and they tell us not only about those who did eventually work in India, but also about those who did not get there. In one particular case from 1898 we see Henry Kempshall, a 22 year old gardener who had worked at Kew for nearly two years in the Palm House, Stove and Melon Yard having to withdraw his application, with the reason

given that he could not obtain consent from his parents to go abroad. Unfortunate for Kempshall, but an opening for Robert Proudlock, who was put forward as a replacement candidate and started service in the Botanic Gardens Calcutta and Darjeeling in 1898.⁸

The archives at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew have a lot to show us about how ordinary people played a part in the British Empire. Through staff records and correspondence, we can gain an insight into the individuals whose hard work and determination ensured the creation and maintenance of some of the world's greatest botanic gardens.

1. Fry, Carolyn, *The World of Kew*, 2007, p.100
2. Desmond, Ray, *A Century of Kew Plantsman: A Celebration of the Kew Guild*, 1993, p.93
3. MR/228, MR/229, Calcutta, Botanic Gardens, Gardeners, Archive Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
4. MR/228, Calcutta, Botanic Gardens, Gardeners, p.35, Archive Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
5. MR/228, Calcutta, Botanic Gardens, Gardeners, pp.176-185, Archive Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
6. DC/156/1038, Letter from D Prain to W Thistelton-Dyer, 21 January 1900, Archive Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
7. DC/159/210, Letter from A Griessen to D Prain, 15 December 1913, Archive Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
8. MR/228, Calcutta, Botanic Gardens, Gardeners, Archive Collection, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew

Louise Clarke is Assistant Archivist, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew



Editor's note:

Louise's article demonstrates just what a rich resource the archives at Kew are. I first came across them when researching a local nurseryman's business. He trained at Kew and was employed on various estates around the country. It was possible to follow his career, and also his subsequent connections with the national world of horticulture through the records at Kew and in the Journal of the Kew Guild. The Kew Guild was founded in 1893 for staff and students of the Royal Botanic Gardens. Its Journal has been digitised and can be searched online . JH*

<https://kewguild.org.uk/journal/online-journal/>

(*see Sarum Chronicle 16 2016)

The British Record Society

For over 125 years the British Record Society has been making available printed versions of sources of major importance to local, family and national historians. BRS was founded in 1889 to compile, edit, and publish indexes, calendars and transcripts of historical records in public or private custody throughout Great Britain. For many years it concentrated on producing indexes to English probate records to facilitate the study of English history and genealogy. More recently it has been engaged in a major programme of publishing transcripts of the seventeenth-century hearth tax returns which provide comprehensive genealogical information together with a unique indicator of contemporary wealth, status, population and houses. In 2016 the Society launches a third, new series on apprenticeship records, the first volume of which is *Apprenticeship Disputes in the Lord Mayor's Court of London 1573-1723* edited by Dr Michael Scott.

The British Record Society is a registered United Kingdom Charity (No. 248874) and its work (undertaken by volunteers) is funded by subscriptions both from individuals and institutions worldwide. The current Chair of the Council is Dr Kate Tiller of Oxford University who succeeded the late Professor David Hey in 2016.

The Society aims to publish a volume each year which subscribers receive free of charge. In recent years subscribers have received the following. In the probate series: *Wills in the Archdeacons' Court of Barnstaple 1506-1858* and *Wills in the Consistory Court of Lichfield 1650-1700*; the next volume will cover the medieval and peculiar court of Yorkshire. In the hearth tax series: *Essex Heath Tax Returns Michaelmas 1670*; *Warwickshire Hearth Tax Returns, Michaelmas 1670, with Coventry Lady Day 1666*; *London and Middlesex 1666 Hearth Tax*; and *Yorkshire East Riding Hearth Tax 1672-3*. Good progress is being made towards the completion of several other counties, particularly Norfolk, Northumberland, Bristol, and Huntingdonshire.

And the next volume in the apprenticeship series, following BRS's most recent publication in 2016 of *Disputes in the Lord Mayor's Court*, will cover the records of the Merchant Taylors' Company of London.

www.britishrecordsociety.org

The British Records Association

The BRA is a charity which aims to promote the preservation, understanding, accessibility and study of our recorded history. As such it speaks independently for the archives and is a voice 'Working for Archives'. It is open to anyone interested in records and archives, be they local historians, academics, professional archivists, owners of collections, or simply those who are curious about the records of our past. Founded in 1932 the Association has played a major role in saving records at risk, helping to distribute records from legal firms, organisations and individuals to appropriate archives.

Apart from our records preservation work there is an Annual Conference; recent themes covered have included philanthropy, travel, pressure groups and sport. At this last conference a paper on the archives of Halford Bowls Club in Warwickshire revealed much about the sorts of people who were members (effectively a roll-call of the local gentry). Although the club only holds three minute & memorandum books, 1786-1877, we learnt a lot about its significance in the local community for networking – inevitably over good food and wine! This year's conference, to be held jointly with the Gardens Trust on 21st November, will cover the records of small gardens. The Conference gives an opportunity for people to discuss issues across a wide range of topics, and to meet those working with archives as researchers and curators.

In addition publications in the *Archives and the User* series have provided essential guidance on how to research topics such as Education, Nonconformity and the History of Houses. Our journal *Archives* always contains articles with some relevance to local historians from the medieval period up to the present day, with reviews of VCH publications for example and guides to local sources.

This year the Association has also introduced visits to archives; the first was to Eton College archives, and on 8th December there will be the chance to visit Westminster Abbey Library and Muniment Room, again with a personal tour by the keeper. The annual Bond Lecture this year will be given by Dr Caroline Shenton, on 27th October entitled 'Behind the Portcullis: Writing stories from the Parliamentary Archives'.

www.britishrecordsassociation.org.uk

From the trenches to Tendring: embroidered postcards in Tendring

Claire Driver

As part of the First World War centenary commemorations, The Friends of Jaywick Martello Tower were awarded a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to research correspondence sent to this part of Essex. This included three separate family collections of embroidered postcards. Two of these collections were sent to families in Clacton and Manningtree at the time of the war with the other moving to Tendring in a later family relocation. It has been interesting to compare the cards and how they were used, and to see what we can learn from them about men that sent them.

Most of the postcards are made up of a stitched panel inserted into a card mount and are printed with 'Fabrication Francaise', 'Carte Postale' or have publisher marks that confirm they were produced in France. None of the cards have any postal marks on them or any lengthy messages which might suggest they were posted in envelopes along with a letter.

The cards in each of our collections have been well looked after: the colours are still bright and the silk embroidered panels undamaged. They appear to have been something special to keep safe and to cherish as symbols of love and affection.

Our first collection was sent to Clacton by David Calver of the Army Service Corps. The cards were kept by his daughter and then granddaughter who told us that they had been kept with envelopes for a while but that these were now lost. We don't know any details of where David was when he sent the cards although there are occasional handwritten messages such as 'At the Front' or 'In France'. However, there are clues in the designs, such as 'A souvenir from Kemmel', the Cloth Hall in Ypres and the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Brebières in Albert.

David sent the cards to his wife and young family. The cards for his children have stitched mottos such as 'my best kisses' and 'Best love' and even in these short messages there is a real sense of a loving father separated from his growing family. Some of the designs he chose for his wife have a more seri-

ous tone showing war damage which were perhaps less appropriate for the children.

A smaller collection from Manningtree is interesting for the sender's choice of suitable cards for members of his family. George Chaplin of the Royal West Surrey Regiment sent cards to his parents, sister and brother in 1917. The longest message he wrote was to his 10 year old sister Sybil: 'Just a few lines hoping that they will find you quite well as it leaves me the same. I hope that this card will suit you as it is the only one I could get.'



One card that George sent home has a striking embroidered panel that reads 'To my dear father'. There is certainly a feeling that George was close to his family and that he missed them.

The only accurately dated card that George sent was written to his parents on 28.7.17 and perhaps this date has some special family sig-

nificance. The card itself is stitched with the message 'I think of you', has a pocket on the front with a printed card insert that reads 'How I miss you' and George has added 'From your loving son George'.

The third collection of postcards made its way to Tendring after the war. It is an interesting comparison with the previous two as we know that the man who sent these cards, Edgar Weygang of the Middlesex Regiment, did not serve abroad.

Like the other cards there are no postal marks, but they are printed with French manufacture or publisher details so clearly originated in France. The cards were written from Edgar to his sweetheart and were obviously available to him at home at some time. We don't know if the cards were posted or given and as none are dated we cannot even say if they were exchanged during the war, although the messages suggest they were written before the couple were married in 1921.

These three collections have limited use in discovering facts about the men who sent them, but they have raised interesting questions about how cards were used and received. They have also provided a fascinating glimpse into the personal relationships of the men involved as they seem to express warmth, affection and a longing for home in just a few words.

From the Trenches to Tendring was funded by a First World War, Then and Now grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, by Essex County Council and Tendring District Council.



You can find out more about the project at <https://trenchestotendring.wordpress.com>

or contact us at
TrenchestoTendring@outlook.com

Claire Driver is the project co-ordinator

VCH Gloucestershire: a new big red book

Volume 13, the *Vale of Gloucester and Leaden valley*, of the Victoria County History of Gloucestershire was launched in September. The volume was completed by the County History Trust, following the withdrawal six years ago of funding from the County Council and the University of Gloucestershire. James Hodson, chairman of the Trust, presented a copy to Dame Janet Trotter, Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire.



Professor Emeritus Christopher Dyer (*above*) gave a thoughtful and entertaining lecture examining the area covered by the volume, the nature of the parishes therein, and the influence of the River Severn and of the city of Gloucester. He congratulated the editors and contributors, John Juōica, Simon Draper, and John Chandler, and urged the audience to purchase their own copy of the book.

Earlier in the day county editor John Chandler gave a lecture about his work on the volume as part of Gloucester History Festival, one of a week-long series held in the magnificent Blackfriars.

<http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/gloucestershire>



*Outside
Wallworth Hall,
(l - r) Simon
Draper, Nick
Herbert, John
Chandler, and
James Hodson*

One less to go!

Mervyn Benford

You have just returned to your stage coach after walking in thick snow to help the horses up the hill. Soon you see a shaped piece of stone carved 'Stow 8 miles'. 'Thank goodness' your companions exclaim - 'another mile gone!'

Travelling in the earliest days of coaching could be uncomfortable and tiring. Turnpike trustees managing roads through tolls were required to erect distance markers by the 1740s. Stone was initially used but the Industrial Revolution gave scope for change in style and design. Erosion and damage occurred- today road widening, by-passes, new-build and trading estates see markers disappear. Eventually Highways Boards and then County Councils were made responsible- all such markers became, and remain unless otherwise explained, public property.

Motoring brought more roads - better signing was needed. Finger-posts at road junctions were more useful. Then in 1939, with invasion feared, Government ordered all finger-posts to be turned while distance markers had to be buried or de-faced. Metal ones, including plates that had been fixed to stones, could have ended up as scrap for military hardware.



Typical of the work of the Society is a bid currently with HLF for funding restoration of six of these unique distance markers still surviving in various conditions

In 1941 Government rescinded but many buried would be left buried - effectively redundant. Today redundancy means maintenance funding is limited to heritage budgets-

and minimal. The sadly diminished stock, once tens of thousands along what became every 'A' and 'B' road, is today the dedicated concern of a heritage charity, The Milestone Society. We seek to identify what remains, recording and protecting it through local branch and parish activity as well as Local Authority co-operation - largely without funding.

Our website shows a fine level of achievement - some 9000 markers recorded in a superb and graphic database - over 90% of what survives. It is a major record of the story of travel in our country. We work closely with English Heritage and the National Monuments Record Office. More public awareness of our work is very much needed. We welcome

help of every kind, local, parish, historical society and indeed our public authorities who own them all. We welcome help with major projects like restoring six A34 mileposts of a unique design sadly lost to decades of post-war neglect. Theft is a problem; they turn up on E-bay, at car boot sales and in reputable auction houses that rarely realise they are publicly owned and probably stolen - unless very good provenance exists - at least until the police arrive.

Milestones, Mervyn Benford, Shire Books:
ISBN 978-0-74780-526-7 £5.99



a fine example of industrial carving creating a series of stones along the A49 in Lancashire near Wigan.

www.milestonesociety.co.uk

Jack Percival, local historian 1915-2015

Ann Rycraft

Jack Percival died last year, 3 months after his 100th birthday, mourned by his large family, a wide group of friends, and numerous individuals and organisations who had benefitted from his extensive knowledge of local history.

Jack was born at Kimberley, near Nottingham. His father was pit doctor; he died when Jack was four and his mother moved the family to Scarborough. Jack hoped to become a doctor like his father, but the cost was beyond the family's means, so he left school at 14 and went to work on his uncle's farm. After some years he left and joined the army, serving in India and Burma. In India, he was once reprimanded for diverting a party of soldiers in his charge from the arranged route, reckoning that both they and he should see the Taj Mahal. As war approached, Jack transferred from army to Air Force, and trained in Canada, becoming a gunner. He was eventually posted back to Yorkshire, to RAF Snaith, the town which would later become central to his local history work. After various post-war jobs he returned to farming, buying, with his brother, a farm near Scarborough, and later becoming a farm manager.

After retirement, Jack settled at Cowick, south of Selby, and now had more time to pursue his life-long interest in history; to read, join local societies, and travel. He was an active member of the Snaith and District Local History Society, becoming Chairman and later President. He belonged to a research group in Airmyn and later became Life President of the Boothferry Heritage Society. He not only attended, but also arranged lifelong learning classes, visits and excursions, always happy to share his increasing knowledge and experience.

He became busier as he got older, always learning something new. He joined a WEA class in York, working from original documents on medieval and early modern craftsmen's wills. This group eventually began to use a computer and Jack became very computer-conscious, learning from his grandson Tim. He proposed that this group should 'walk the will' of a 15th century York merchant, visiting all the sites and properties named in the lengthy document; this eventually became

two long and fascinating walks. The wills work also led him, now in his late seventies, to learn documentary Latin, and he became a founder member of a group transcribing Latin documents, which they later published.

Jack he was not pleased when, eventually, his family insisted on driving him to meetings, rather than his using buses. His sight may have deteriorated but his prodigious memory, trained over many pre-Google years, certainly had not. His recall of working methods and his local knowledge could be invaluable – whether explaining the use of a 'clout', or recalling how a village name had once been pronounced. He could estimate a rough distance, dependant on route, while others were still reaching for maps.

Then, at the end of one York meeting, he announced his resignation. He was 94 years old, his general health was deteriorating and he had decided that, as he put it, he was no longer contributing. Characteristically, he reached this conclusion himself, surprising even his family. When, years before, he had researched his family tree, Jack had been surprised, and rather proud, to find that one of his 17th century ancestors had died at the age of 99. Jack outlived him by a year. He is remembered with affection and respect by many who enjoyed his company and shared his enthusiasm for local history. His work lives on in them.

World War I centenary in USA

The US World War I Centennial Commission was created by Act of Congress in 2013. Their huge website acts as a focus for information and activities - 'to honour, commemorate, educate' - across the county relating to the centenary. For example, under Education there are links to historical materials, educational resources for teaching and learning, and a location explorer of relevant sites.

www.worldwar1centennial.org

Memorial service for Nurse Agatha Joan Credland

Sharron Banham

On 7th September 2016, a group of people - family and friends - met at Stow Cemetery to honour Nurse Agatha Joan Credland who was killed, along with another nurse and seven patients, during a German bombing raid on the 7th September 1940 when Queen Mary's Hospital in Stratford, in the east end of London, took a direct hit.

Nurse Credland was born in 1919, one of ten children of Elizabeth and Robert Credland of Stow. After completing her education at Sturton by Stow she trained as a nurse at the hospital at Gringley on the Hill. From there she moved to London to continue nursing at Queen Mary's Hospital.

After the bombing Nurse Credland was brought back to Stow and the Rev T Cole conducted her funeral. Among the mourners were her mother and father, sisters Rhoda, Beatie and Jessie, brothers Ted, Joe and Leonard together with sisters-in-law Molly, Peggy and Nellie and brother-in-law George. Also present were her Aunt Annie and Mabel, friends Nurse Archer, and Joyce and Barbara Bradshaw, Mr & Mrs Clixby from Blyton and Girl Guides past and present from Stow and Sturton. Among the many floral tributes were wreaths from the Matron of Gringley on the Hill hospital, the Girl Guides, the Chairman and Committee of Queen Mary's hospital and from the Matron, Sisters and Nurses of Queen Mary's.

Move forward to 2014; local historian Terry Marker researched all names listed on our WW1 & WW2 memorials and his work identified 'one' unmarked resting place which was that of Nurse Credland. Terry and Clive Thompson decided to work together on finding Agatha's final resting place. Consulting old parish plans with the help of Charles Hewitt and David Justham, the group were able to locate the exact position of her grave.

Clive then started to make enquiries about locating living relatives and found Rita and David Willford (Rita was Nurse Agatha's niece) who live in North Hykeham and they in

turn contacted other relatives with a view to see how many would be able to assemble at the graveside for a fitting memorial.

Clive then approached West Lindsey District council via Reg Shore and through

WLDC's 'Councillor Initiative Fund' monies were found to pay for a headstone. Draper Memorials of Lincoln was Clive's next stop and this company made the headstone which was duly dedicated on the 76th anniversary of Nurse Credland's death.

Twenty five family members from around the country met on a glorious sunny day to pay their respects and a lovely ceremony was taken by the Rev Dr Helen Hooley of Saxilby Methodist Church. The Stow bell ringers provided two muffled peals during the morning.

After the ceremony the family went to the Cross Keys where photographs, stories and memories were swapped and collected to hopefully be passed down to future generations to come.

Fees were generously waived by Rev Hooley and the Methodist Church, Stow Parish Council at the graveyard, and the bell ringers.

Sharron Banham is Secretary of Sturton & Stow History Society (Lincolnshire)



Climate change, local historians and public history

Andrew Jackson

Climate change and attendant sea-level rises pose major challenges for those from a wide range of academic disciplines, professional backgrounds, and interest groups. It might be asked what role historians and history might play? More specifically still, what might local and community historical activity, and public history, contribute; and what might research undertaken within universities, popular-historical engagement, and their interactions, offer the debate, public policy and collective action? Local history is a pursuit and purpose that is broadly defined, encompassing community history, and overlapping with public history. Has it something to put forward towards a more corporate and coordinated response to climate change? Local historians could have a significant part to perform in those ways through which we might acknowledge, recognise, record, and protect those elements of the historical environment that will evolve and those that may eventually be lost.

I am prompted to write this piece for a couple of reasons. The first is professional. My background in geography as much as history, and more specifically local history, means that I value highly applied avenues of research enquiry. What better as a field of applied investigation than the care of the historical environment and heritage resources, and what more pressing an endeavour than informing responses to what climate change may bring? My second motivation is more personal. A few weeks ago I was speaking with my father, who mentioned that cliff erosion near Exmouth in Devon had required the rerouting of a footpath. It would now to pass through a meadow, one with special and precious associations; a meadow into which, in my childhood imagination, my family alone of course would stray, to see orchids, wild flowers and the dwelling place of what seemed like one-half-of-Creation's insect life, which was frenetically pollinating or consuming its way through the local plant life. I was left pondering the fact that 'hard' survey techniques, and gathered and published data, form an ever-building resource and record, capturing the material character of vulnerable historical environments, whether climate change will exacerbate this fragility or not. However, who

or what, I also wondered, is considering the 'soft' and less tangible, the memory and testimony to the value and meaning of those environments, whether held by communities, families, or individuals.

Regarding Devon more broadly, what the future may bring to its southern and eastern coastlines makes compelling observation. What happens each year to that short stretch at Dawlish, for example, where the rail mainline runs between Exeter and Plymouth, brings national media attention, and is a barometer of the severity of each stormy season. In the present, meanwhile, I no longer live in the South-West, but towards the eastern edge of England. Here the tide laps against a far softer and lower-lying coastline, and towards the feet of perhaps an even more watchful and anxious population.

Local history is an especially long-standing field of enquiry, finding firm roots in Britain from the sixteenth century. Under its older label, antiquarianism, it developed notable qualities. It hosted and stimulated lively interaction between both artistic and scientific lines of enquiry. Antiquarians were on a quest for encyclopaedic and empirical knowledge, for gratifyingly non-discipline-bounded understanding, and for perspectives on the past as local and regional historical ecologies. They were fascinated by new discovery, and also sensitive towards that which was fragile or had disappeared, including the impact of landscape and environmental change. In recent times local historians have continued in their diverse pursuit of the study of the past. They have also sustained their heritage-mindedness, with an eye on the future and the threats that it will bring; that which is crumbling, literally and metaphorically, is often a spur to action for the more activist among local historians.

Community history has more akin with, than difference from, local history; and its seeking out of the histories of, by and for communities of people has further relevance here. Local and community historians are currently and typically involved in projects attending to the

evolving landscape, including histories of environmental changes and extreme weather events, and this might increasingly attend to the study of climate-change impact. Relevant here is as well is public history, which too has much to offer the topic. Public history, in its traditions and practices, coincides a great deal with local history, and the achievement of popular engagement. An element of public history is also derived from the view that the past has a deterministic influence on the present, and that a better understanding of the past might sagely guide our future. However, public history's contribution is further refined around engagement with the more topical and critical issues of the day, and, through this, a bringing together of both academic and popular perspectives on pre-occupying areas of debate. Public history might, and ought, have something to say about climatic and environmental change.

There are difficult choices to be made in the decades ahead: which ecosystems, communities and landscapes will be preserved, which will be largely left to mutate, and which will disappear. There may be much for 'rescue' historians, influenced by thought and approach in local, community and public history to take up as a task. Such historians are equipped with their personal and well-informed knowledge of, and commitment to, places and communities; and are broad ranging in their interdisciplinary interests and practices. They have a keen and active part to play in observing, recording and relating the evolution and disappearance of cultures and environments – quantitative and qualitative, tangible and intangible, the known and the felt, and the collective and personal.

Dr Andrew Jackson is Head of School of Humanities, Bishop Grosseteste University, Lincoln

Earth in Vision

The BBC archive has millions of hours of programmes over many decades. The Earth in Vision project, now in its third year (of three) has been exploring environment-related programmes from the late 1950s to the present. Based in the Open University Geography Department they are asking big questions - what do users want from digital broadcast archives, and what tools exist for their use, and what of the future - what expectations will users have of the vast amount of digital resources with which we will be faced?

<http://www.open.ac.uk/researchcentres/osrc/research/projects/ahrc-project-earth-in-vision>

see also the magazine of the Historical Association, *The Historian* Spring 2016 pp 18 - 23

Help wanted on the all-women Army Remount Depot, Wiltshire

Tim Symonds is searching for material on the all-women Army Remount Depot at Russley Park, near Marlborough, from the time the depot opened in 1916 to the end of the Great War. He is particularly keen to hear about letters or diaries written by the 30 or more young women at the depot who broke in, trained and rehabilitated horses for the Western Front.



The depot was run by Lady Mabel Birkbeck with Mrs. Ironside as her Head Groom. Their female staff consisted of women with a good understanding of horses. They might be 'gentlewomen' who had spent their lives around horses, perhaps hunting regularly, or farmers' wives and daughters who had kept and ridden horses as part of their daily life. Either way they had a unique affinity with the animals and were prepared for hard work in the retraining that was required. Russley Park had a capacity for 100 animals and actually received 365 during the course of the First World War, producing 308 that were suitable for army use. They concentrated on the horses belonging to officers, and once re-trained they were quickly sent back to the front.

The women themselves would often walk to the station to collect the incoming horses, donkeys and mules, and then walk back controlling horses that were roped together perhaps five abreast. As well as mucking out the stables, grooming, feeding and caring for the horses, they often had to endure harsh living conditions themselves. Their appearance often caused comments locally as they dressed in breeches and caps and rode astride the horses, making this ultimately more socially acceptable. They were well thought of by those in charge and were highly praised for their efforts and efficiency.

please contact Tim by email
tim.symonds@shevolution.com

A town that moved

Jane Howells

In the middle of August the 35th annual Sweet Corn Festival in Fairborn Ohio was held in Community Park. Large crowds of people enjoyed the food stalls, patronised craftspeople from the area, discovered more about their city services – there was a fire truck to climb on and a police dog to pet – and talked to representatives of local organisations. I could not resist 'Fairborn Area Historical Society' where a young, enthusiastic history graduate, supported by a comprehensive display of maps and old photographs, explained how the group has a programme of activities that would be expected of a local history society anywhere. It had come about in recent years following the marking of the 65th anniversary of the city, created under very special circumstances described below, and growing interest from people taking tertiary courses at Wright State University, which has a popular Public History programme.

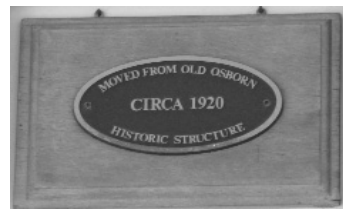
Dayton Ohio is known to most of us for hosting the 1995 talks that resulted in peace between Bosnia and Herzegovina, though the venue was actually Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, adjacent to Fairborn. At the beginning of the twentieth century it was the location for much of the Wright Brothers pioneering work on the development of powered flight. In March 1913 Dayton was subject to a devastating flood when the Great Miami River and its tributaries sent millions of tons of water down into the urban area. Destruction was widespread, and over 360 people lost their lives, 20,000 homes were lost and damage of over \$100m (at 1913 values) occurred. Although Dayton was originally laid out in 1795 this one event accounts for the dearth of historic buildings in the city centre.

In response to the flooding, a major project of defences was constructed on the rivers feeding the floodplain upstream from Dayton. Five vast earthen dams were built with conduits to release a steady flow of water under normal conditions. Hundreds of acres behind the dams are used for farmland and public open spaces, which would be sacrificed to flood water to protect the built-up areas if necessary.



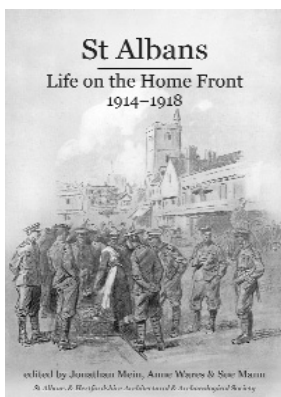
Two villages, though largely unaffected by the 1913 flooding, were to have their futures changed by these developments. In the early 1920s the community of Osborn found itself in the designated Huffman flood plain. Rather than abandon their homes, the citizens decided to move them. Almost 400 houses were physically raised onto trailers (see above) and pulled some three miles to be re-established next to their neighbouring village of Fairfield. As you have probably guessed by now, the two became Fairborn, formally merging in 1950. Main Street still contains a number of the original Osborn houses. A potential project for the Historical Society is to reinstate a complete set of plaques recognising these buildings.

The Society's Facebook pages form an effective public window for the history of the community, containing many old photographs, memories from residents, questions and answers, and discussion. Fairborn may have a unique history itself, but its society is typical of excellent grass-roots local history in action.





The St Albans & Hertfordshire Architectural & Archaeological Society



recently launched its new book, *St Albans: Life on the Home Front, 1914-1918*, the result of three years' intensive study by twenty-one members of the Society. The book is published by Hertfordshire Publications, an imprint of the University of Hertfordshire Press. www.stalbanshistory.org

Huddersfield & District Family History Society are holding a Family & Local History Fair on Saturday 12 November. They promise 'there will be something for everyone' amongst the stands, exhibitions and talks. Full detail can be found on their website www.hdfhs.org.uk

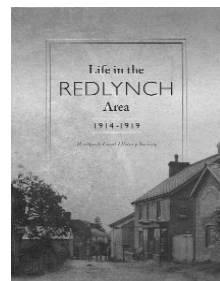
The Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society celebrated its 150th anniversary over the weekend of 9-10th September. The occasion was marked by a special dinner and book launch, followed by a conference held at the Rheged Centre in Penrith, jointly presented by the CWAAS and the Regional Heritage Centre at the University of Lancaster. The scope of the day was ambitious, with contributions spanning all periods from pre-history to recent industrial archaeology. The Gosforth



CWAAS secretary Marian McClintock and Professor Angus Winchester
photo Trevor Grahamslaw

Cross and Hadrian's Wall were among the key sites discussed, while the history of Cumbria was shown to matter on a national scale. All the conference papers underlined the significance of the Society's leading role in 'investigating, describing and preserving' Cumbria's past. The Anniversary celebrations will continue for the rest of the year, with special exhibitions, lectures and excursions. www.cumbria-past.com

Redlynch & District Local History Society celebrated its 20th anniversary on Saturday October 8th with a special reception for members and invited guests. Guest of honour was Pat Millington who founded the Society in 1996. The event was part of an Open Weekend when the Society mounted an Exhibition entitled 'Redlynch - the Past 20 Years'. Photographs and articles depicted 'then and now', revealing how many changes have occurred recently within the Parish. To name just a few, Redlynch is now within the New Forest National Park; two shops, two pubs and one of the schools have closed; and the local postman uses a van instead of his bicycle. Another display traced the development of the Society, illustrating the many activities in which it has been involved during the past twenty years. Also available was 'New Forest Remembers World War 1', which featured our own panel on 'Redlynch's call to arms'. As always, visitors to the Exhibition were amazed at the wealth of information, and some had their own photographs or memories to contribute. It also provided a good opportunity to promote local history. www.redlynchlocalhistory.org



There are still some places left for local history society delegates from the 'old' county of Warwickshire (including Birmingham, Coventry, Solihull and surroundings) at **Warwickshire Local History Society's** third workshop/conference. Entitled 'Getting Online for Research and Publicity' it focuses on free websites that can help groups and individuals in LHSs with their local-history research, and how societies can set up their own websites and what benefits that can bring. LHSs are also encouraged to show and sell their publications. The conference is on Saturday November 12th from 10am-4pm at Warwick School and costs £20 to include free parking, hot drinks and a buffet lunch. LHSs not already booked in are encouraged to contact Neville Usher as soon as possible on info@warwickshirehistory.org.uk or 01789 205043

Hundreds of memorial inscriptions ('MIs') on graves marked by 'heraldic ledger stones' in Kent parish churches, Canterbury Cathedral and Rochester Cathedral can now be accessed on-line following the completion of a transcription and digital imaging project by **Kent Archaeological Society** volunteers. Among those recorded are ledger stones of the grandfather of Samuel Pepys's mistress; the founder of almshouses immortalized in a Charles Dickens story; a 'gentlewoman' buried in a Canterbury church whose tower is all that survived after the city's devastating Blitz in 1942; Lydd's youngest Town Clerk; and possibly New Romney's youngest Mayor.



Removing a lead coffin during a dig at St George's Church Canterbury
photo: Canterbury Archaeological Trust

Heraldic ledger stones were favoured by middle-class families who wanted to bury their dead beneath church floors, near the more grandiose memorials erected by their wealthier fellow-parishioners. The practice peaked in the 18th century and ceased in the 1850s when burials within churches, except in existing family vaults, were banned. After the First World War Nicholas Eyre Toke (below) spent



Cecilia Stede's ledger stone, All Saints church, Hollingbourne, rubbing by Toke

Here lyes interred the body of Mrs Cecilia STEDE the most intirely Beloved wife of Collu Edwin STEDE His Ma Lieutenant Gouvernour of the Island of Barbadoes. She was the Daughter of the Loyal Sr Wm CLARK that lost his life at Croyplady Bridge in Kent the service of his King and Country. She died at Betherden the 1st February Anno Dom. 1685/6.

most of his leisure-time visiting churches to make rubbings of monumental brasses. He adapted this method to reproducing coats-of-arms on ledger stones after noticing that those in Canterbury Cathedral were rapidly becoming eroded under the feet of thousands of visitors. 'It is possible to make photographs of valuable memorials,' he wrote in 1929, 'but an exposure of an hour or two is necessary even in a well-lit church.' He donated his rubbings to the V&A in London after photographing them on glass-plate negatives for the KAS. These negatives were carefully stored in the KAS Library in Maidstone until, more than 50 years after he died in 1960, aged 94, the society decided they should be scanned and the images made freely available on the internet to researchers who would otherwise be unaware that they existed or know their content.

<http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/19/000.htm>

'Ploughshares into Swords' is the title of the **Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology's** Industrial Heritage Day on 12 November in Lincoln. It is sub-titled 'The contribution of Lincoln's manufacturing companies to the Great War. www.slha.org.uk

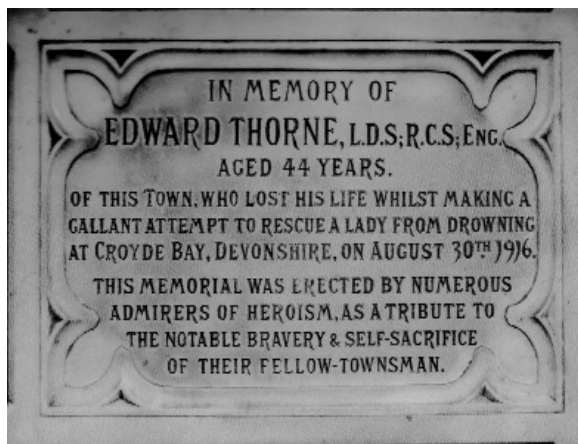
Clements Hall Local History Group in York hosts 'Responses to WW1 Conscription', a training workshop to be held on 5 December on the use of WW1 Military Tribunal Appeals papers held at North Yorkshire County Record Office. Following the introduction of conscription in Britain 100 years ago men were allowed to appeal for a temporary exemption or, in special circumstances, permanent exemption, on grounds of fitness or special family circumstances. The Act also allowed an appeal based on a conscientious objection to fighting. The workshop will share examples, and explore questions such as how personal decisions were shaped by religious, and other organisations, and by the local press; what applications for exemption from conscription tell us about local employment, business and trade at the time; and how Yorkshire experience compares with other counties. It is relevant to local and family history groups, and to other organisations and individuals with an interest in the topic. For details and booking form: <https://clementshallhistorygroup.wordpress.com/2016/09/08/a-new-resource-for-exploring-the-impact-of-ww1-conscription/>

The Wavertree Society has explored the database compiled by the University College, London, project on Legacies of British Slave-ownership (see *Local History News* 115 p 17) When slavery was abolished the British government paid £20 million compensation to the slave owners. You can search by name and place to discover who received the money, how much, where they lived, what networks they were involved with, and more. www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs. Four men were found giving their address as 'Wavertree', and the article in the society's newsletter traces their careers and locates their houses and workplaces. www.wavertreesociety.org

The Bromyard & District History Society celebrated its 50th anniversary this summer. They are fortunate in having a headquarters which houses exhibition space, a shop, research room and archive. The building was purchased by the Society in 1999 and converted to its present use with assistance of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The centre was opened for public use on May 1st 2003 and has been an overwhelming success, widely admired for the range of heritage services being provided on a voluntary basis under one roof. Amongst their many activities has been the publication of 21 books. Their current exhibition is The Home Front in Bromyard & District during WW1. www.bromyardhistorysociety.org.uk

On 22 November the **Society of Antiquaries of London** are offering an opportunity to visit their historic apartments at Burlington House to learn about the history of one of Britain's oldest learned societies. They also have a programme of monthly free public lectures and other events to which non-members are welcome. www.sal.org.uk/public-lectures/

Heroism features in two newsletters recently. **Borough of Twickenham Local History Society** investigated a plaque on the stairs at Twickenham Library to Edward Thorne from that town 'who lost his life whilst making a gallant attempt to rescue a lady from drowning at Croyde Bay, Devonshire, on August 30th 1916'. Their local paper gives a little information in the report of Mr Thorne's funeral; he was a dentist and had two sons who were on holiday with him and his wife when the tragedy occurred. A much fuller report appeared in the *North Devon Journal*. Two men drowned trying to save a nurse, Miss Nelson, who had got into difficulties. She was rescued by a young man from Bristol and other helpers. www.botlhs.co.uk



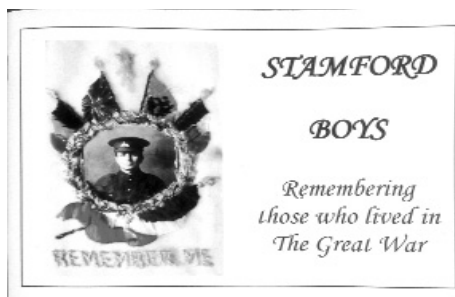
Archie Hickling's story is related by **Keyworth & District Local History Society**. Born in Keyworth in 1884, by a convoluted route he was in British Columbia, Canada in 1909. The Okanagan Hotel caught fire in the early morning of 10 August. The alarm was raised, the fire brigade arrived within minutes, but the building was quickly engulfed. Archie was one of the most active in rescuing many other people from the hotel, including several children, but sadly did not survive himself. As the local paper put it 'danger of the most appalling type had no terrors for him that could weigh against the call of duty'. www.keyworth-history.org.uk

In September the **Forest of Dean Local History Society** organised the unveiling of a new memorial stone (seen arriving earlier in the year) at the New Fancy amenity site. This is run by the Forestry Commission on the site of a former coal mine of the same name. There is a unique Geomap which celebrates the geological and industrial history of the area, each layer of which is made from the actual rock it represents, taken from local quarries. Overlying the geology is a map of the industrial history showing 102 collieries, 35 iron mines and 49 stone quarries.

www.forestofdeanhistory.org.uk



In *Local History News* 113 (Autumn 2014) an article described the purpose and progress of the Stamford Boys 1911 project. The research group from **Stamford & District Local History Society** has now spent 3 years investigating all the boys aged 11 to 16 listed in 6 parishes of the 1911 census. There were eventually 450 'boys' studied of whom 58 died in World War I. Of the rest many served in the armed forces and a minority, for various reasons, stayed at home. The group were always particularly interested in following



the lives of those who survived the War whether or not they served abroad. Many returned with life changing injuries unable to work and suffering mentally so few in the town were spared the effect on family and neighbours. Others were able to return and lead fulfilling lives. Some died comparatively young but we discovered that a substantial number lived into the 1980s and a few into the 1990s so were known to people now living in Stamford. One example is George Nelson Riley who died, having served many years on the Town Council and as Mayor of Stamford, just short of his 100th birthday.

All the initial research including short biographies of the 'Boys' has now been completed. These have been collected in 8 loose-leaf files which have been deposited in Stamford Town Hall Archive. A booklet (*below left*) accompanying the collection has been printed listing all the boys, their addresses in 1911, their dates where available and a reference to the folders. It also outlines the work and conclusions of the group and has suggestions for future work using the research. The biographies are also available online at stamfordboys.uk where there is a facility for anyone with additional information to fill gaps or make corrections. We have been fortunate in having an excellent webmaster to do this work but are currently looking for sponsors to ensure the site continues to be maintained.

www.stamfordboys.uk

Mary Ward College of Education in Nottinghamshire was a Roman Catholic teacher training college, constructed in 1968 and closed due to changes in government policy in 1977. The building now houses the headquarters of the British Geological Survey. The latest book from **Keyworth & District Local History Society** describes the college's short life, using documentary sources and interviews with former students and staff. It would be of interest of other students now spread far and wide. An internet search also takes you to the Hansard report of a debate in March 1975 about issues raised by such closures. Mary Ward College was in the constituency of Kenneth Clark who, although he agreed with the policy, was at pains to clarify the conditions under which the staff would have to leave. The book is reviewed by John Beckett in **The Thoroton Society's Newsletter** Autumn 2016. www.thorotonsociety.org.uk www.keyworth-history.org.uk

Romsey Local History Society has discovered references to their town in the *Washington Post* before the Second World War. For example in an article published in August 1938 it was recommended to American visitors under the headline 'Little Romsey Offers Time-Pressed Tourist Excellent Base for Brief Excursions into Typical Old English Countryside'. The author Virginia Lee Warren pointed out that, unlike Winchester and Salisbury which were also convenient as a stop-over between London and the port of Southampton, Romsey was seldom visited by foreigners so it was possible to feel that one was 'really living among the English'. www.ltoas.org.uk



University of Leicester's East Midlands Oral History Archive (EMOHA) of audio recordings with people from Leicestershire & Rutland contains memories stretching back to the 1880s. It provides an insight into the past, including shedding light on many of the interesting – and at times unusual – activities people busied themselves with. In partnership with Leicestershire Rural Partnership (LRP) EMOHA has added short oral history clips from the Archive to village pages on the Leicestershire Villages website.

<http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/emoha.html>

<http://www.le.ac.uk/emoha/community/leicsvillages.html>



picnic at Swithland, described in EMOHA collection

Somerset can claim a longer continuously-known history of official record keeping than any other county in England. A meeting of Quarter Sessions held at Wells in 1617 decided that a room should be provided 'for the safe keeping of the records of the Sessions'. By 1619 Somerset not only had its own record room, but also a room adjoining for the use of searchers. The record room stood next to the

Chain Gate on the north side of Wells Cathedral, and remained in use for the next 200 years. In 1817 a short-lived successor was at Wilton Gaol Taunton, until the records were moved to Shire Hall which opened in 1858. Work to refit the accommodation at Shire Hall meant it was approved by the Master of the Rolls as a repository for manorial documents in 1931. Pioneering again, the fledgling record office could then keep not only the county's official records but also those of private individuals, landed families and corporate bodies. New purpose-built Record Offices opened in 1958, and again in 2010 where the **Somerset Heritage Centre** houses not only archives but also local studies, museums, historic environment and the VCH.

www.somerset.gov.uk/archives/AboutSRO.htm



The National Archives has launched a new online platform 'Great Wharton'. This is a fictional town (*above*) which experiences some of the lesser-known stories of the Home Front in the First World War. Everything that happens comes from cases in the records at TNA. Pigeons might be used by enemy aliens, stale bread was considered more nutritious than fresh (and people consumed less), and scouts were called into action (as you have read earlier in this issue on p 6).

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/first-world-war/home-front-stories

Lincolnshire Archives have received some previously 'unknown' medieval records, something which happens only rarely. A portion of the 'lost' accounts of the Guild of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Boston, have recently been deposited. They cover the years 1526-35 and 1536-38. Unknown to anyone in Lincolnshire, they have been in the keeping of the Charity Commissioners in London for over a century. **Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology** *Bulletin* 104 July 2016

'Archives in the Afternoon' is a programme of weekly events at the **National Waterways Museum**, Ellesmere Port. These take place between 2 – 4 pm on 7 November (Canal Songs in Concert), 14 November (The Waterways Archive in 20 objects), 21 November (The Waterways Archive & Family History); 28 November (the History of Ellesmere Port Docks); 5 December (Stan Offley's Cinefilm); 12 December (The Mersey Iron Works); 9 January (Historic Mapping) and 16 January (Reading Old Handwriting). To book email archives@canalrivertrust.org.uk website www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/archive



Ellesmere Port

photograph © Martin Clark licenced for reuse under Creative Commons Licence www.geograph.org.uk



Designs for a new building to house **Lambeth Palace Library** have been unveiled. Lambeth Palace Library is the historic library and record office of the Archbishops of Canterbury and the principal repository of the documentary history of the Church of England. Its collections have been freely available for research since 1610. The records held there date from the 9th century to the present day, and their broad scope reflects the office of Archbishop as head of the Province of Canterbury, his national and international roles in leading the Church of England and the Anglican Communion worldwide, and the wealth and power of Archbishops in past centuries which enabled them to collect books and manuscripts of the highest quality and significance. The work is expected to be completed by the end of 2020. <http://newlambethpalacelibrary.co.uk/>

Norfolk and Norwich Millennium Library is hosting 'Heritage Sundays' this Autumn. The final session is on 20 November when there will be creative, family-friendly activities inspired by rarely-seen items from the Norfolk Heritage Centre. This is a drop-in session suitable for accompanied children aged 4 - 8 years. www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC172061



After the Second World War public art was used to enrich the streets of towns and cities as they were repaired and rebuilt. Five pieces in the North East of England have now been listed Grade II to protect them and recognise their importance. There is a free exhibition at **Bessie Surtees House in Newcastle** until 23 December to explore the stories behind these sculptures.

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/Post-War-Public-Art-in-the-North-East-Listed>



Detail: Parsons' Polygon by David Hamilton, 1982-85. Blackett Street, Newcastle Upon Tyne © Historic England

The Victoria & Albert Museum won The ArtFund Museum of the Year 2016, but the judges' comments praised all five finalists, in Bristol, York and Edinburgh as well as London, for their very special - in some cases spectacular - approaches to the presentation of their collections.

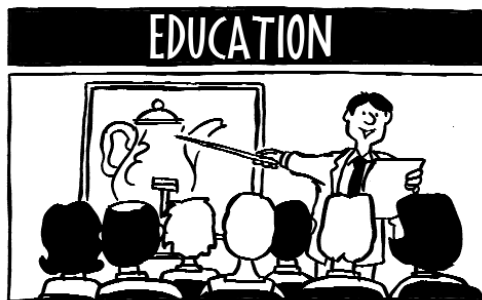
www.artfund.org/prize/news/2016/july/museum-of-the-year-2016-judges-comments

'Local Heroes' is a grant scheme run by **The Royal Society** available to accredited museums and other institutions to engage audiences with the influence of science and scientists on local communities across the UK. The closing date has now passed and we will report further developments with interest. <https://royalsociety.org./grants-schemes-awards/grants/local-heroes/>

'Remaking Beamish' is a £17m project to build a 1950s town. Middlesbrough residents have been asked to vote on what sort of shop should be built, choosing between a hairdresser, electric goods supplier, or toy shop/dolls' hospital. There will be many more aspects to the project, including a cinema, semi-detached houses, and John's Cafe, from Wingate County Durham. A centre for people living with dementia, older people, and their families and carers will be created in a replica of Marsden Road Aged Miners' Homes, in South Shields. Rural life in the surrounding countryside is not forgotten as a Weardale farm, Spain's Field Farm (below) from Eastgate near Stanhope, will be rebuilt stone by stone at the museum. www.beamish.org.uk/about/remaking-beamish/



2016 has been Year of Adventure in Wales, and the **National Museum in Cardiff** has been running an exhibition called 'Treasure: Adventures in Archaeology' as part of this programme. It told the stories behind great archaeological discoveries from ancient civilisations. 2017 will be Year of Legends, so look out for activities and events on this theme. This is explicitly part of the Welsh Government's policy to boost heritage-based tourism, and other elements of the economy, but it also raises the profile of the country's rich history at home. Article in *British Archaeology* Sept/Oct 2016 and <http://gov.wales/topics/tourism/year-of-adventure-2016/?lang=en>



The Locality & Region seminars at the **Institute of Historical Research** take place on alternate Tuesdays during term time. Papers are presented by historians from around the country and cover a variety of topics. Everyone is welcome. On 29 November Robert Tittler will speak on 'Weather, War, and Dearth: The View from Stockton-upon-Tees, 1779-1801'; Sheila Sweetinburgh's title for 13 December is 'Neighbours across the religious divide in Henrician Kent'; and in the New Year David Killingray and Ian Taylor consider 'From risk to choice? A new approach to writing the history of West Kent in the long nineteenth century' on 10 January 2017.

<http://www.history.ac.uk/events/seminars/129>

The Regional History Centre at University of the West of England organises a programme of events at the M Shed in Bristol, open to all. Forthcoming topics are 'Working in the Great Western Cotton factory 1838-1914', Dr Mike Richardson (17 November); 'The Historic King Arthur', Prof Ronald Hutton (7 December); 'Bristol's Radical New Women in the 180s and 90s', Prof Sheila Rowbotham (19 January); 'Law and order in the late Georgian south-west', Dr Rose Wallis (16 February). <http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/cahe/research/regionalhistorycentre/seminarseries.aspx>

Day schools and short courses offered by **Canterbury Christ Church University** include a number of topics of interest to historians. For example 'How to start your family history' on 20 November; 'The History behind the Town of Rye' with Gill Draper on 26 November; and Jane Austen and the Regency on 4 February. For further details of these and many more subjects see <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/cae/cae-home.aspx>

No 68 Chestergate

David Cliffe

I recently had cause to contact the BALH office, and to my surprise, I found that it was in Macclesfield, Cheshire. This is the town where I was born and brought up, though I haven't lived there for forty-odd years. Out of curiosity, I had a look at Google Street View, and found that No. 68 was a shop I remembered as Chapman's ladies' outfitters in the 1950s.

Chestergate, leading from the Market Place towards Chester, some 35 miles distant, had always been one of the most important streets in Macclesfield. It had contained the town houses of the wealthy – the old country landowning families, wanting to look after their interests at the Halmote Court for the Manor and Forest of Macclesfield. In this street, Miser's Hall was said to have been the town house of the Stanley family, the Bate Hall belonged to the Stopfords, Earls of Courtown, and Worth Hall was the house of the Savage family. Only a few doors away from No. 68 was the house of Charles Roe, who in the eighteenth century had amassed 'new money' in the silk trade, and later the copper trade.

By the 1950s, Chestergate was the 'quality street' of Macclesfield, with the shops of ladies' and gentlemen's outfitters. For the gentlemen there was Henry Ward, the hatter, and Ernest Turnock and Nathan Turner, tailors and outfitters. For the ladies, there was Adrienne Lee (of Southport), Barbara Lingard, and, at No. 68, the Misses Chapman, agents for Jaeger clothing.

The building probably dates from around 1835 – the time of the great expansion of Macclesfield, when its silk industry was prospering, and the town was expanding. Old directories show the shop as a draper's, and a gentlemen's outfitters, before it was taken over

in the 1930s by the Misses Frances and Mary Chapman.

At the back of the shop was a part of the yard of the Old Derby arms public house. By the 1950s, the stables and hiring out of horse-drawn coaches and cabs had been replaced by the garage of John Eccles, motor coach proprietor, where you went at Barnaby or Wakes, the local mill holidays, for your trip to Blackpool or Rhyl.

When I took this photograph on a rainy day in 1975, the Chapman sisters' shop was closed and empty, and looking decidedly run-down. One its later incarnations was as The Good Food Shop in the 1990s, and behind it, reached down a passageway, was the short-lived

Harlequin's Wine Bar, in former stables. When Google Street View last passed that way, in November 2015, the ground floor was occupied by Domus, a hardware shop.

I would guess that the staff running the BALH office are happy to be in Macclesfield. I'd be curious to know how they came to be there. When I was a boy, 'Macc' was a smoky mill town, with a declining silk industry, and cheap property. How things have changed. It's now a desirable place in

which to live, with easy access to countryside, frequent fast trains to London and Manchester, expensive property . . . and lots of estate agents!

Editor's note: When David had noticed the address of the new BALH office he told me of his memories, and very kindly sent this note and photograph in response to my request to know more. JH



Reflections on *Early Medieval Kent*...

Gillian Draper

...Or rather, on the successful conference to launch the book of this title held at Canterbury Christ Church University on 3 September. *Early Medieval Kent 800-1220* is the tenth and final volume in the Kent History Project supported by Kent County Council and published by Boydell (you will gather they have not appeared in chronological order!)

Kent is perhaps the only county in the country to have such a series - I would be happy to know if there are others. The book aims to bring together new research under such themes as the city of Canterbury and other towns, settlement patterns, landscape, pilgrimage, church and parish development and monastic culture. It also draws readers' attention to the availability and potential of source material for this period, a substantial body of which is becoming ever more available for local historians to use with the recent publication of N. Brooks and S. Kelly's *Charters of Christ Church Canterbury* (Anglo-Saxon Charters 17, 18, OUP, 2013). Professor Brooks was also able to contribute a chapter to *Early Medieval Kent* before his death.

A particular feature of the book and especially the conference was to highlight and discuss the fruitful interaction in the use of archaeological and historical evidence in exploring and interpreting Kent's past between the fifth and thirteenth centuries. The conference was supported by the Friends of Canterbury Archaeological Trust whose Director and Research Manager were among those giving papers. It was held under the auspices of the relatively new Centre for Kent History and Heritage at Canterbury Christ Church University, and attracted c.140 delegates including past and present students of local history, as well as independent scholars, and those considering studying there. It was an

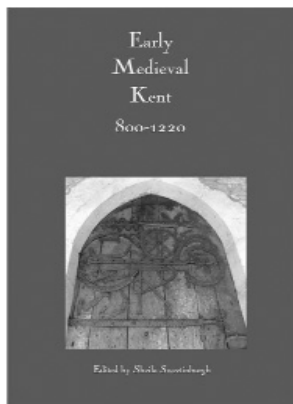
enjoyable day and a testament to the way in which the demand for universities to 'engage' with the public and local communities, and to demonstrate that engagement is beginning to bear fruit for local history.

BALH of course was represented by a brief promotion in one of the conference papers and a stand of publicity materials (including our new membership leaflet) and our books, which sold very well. Those wish to obtain a copy of *Internet Sites for Local Historians: a Directory* will soon be able to find the newly-revised edition available at other events and on the BALH website, and many thanks are due to our vice-chair Jacquie Fillmore for her continued hard work on updating the *Directory* and to Alan Crosby on editing it. *The Directory* is of great interest to historians of all kinds, as is the new edition of David Dymond's *Researching and Writing History: a guide for local historians* (Carnegie Publishing in association with BALH, 2016).

There was interest in BALH essay prize and I hope that in due course offers of papers for the prize will be made to Alan Crosby. Many thanks to our member Pat Thompson for kindly offering to help with the BALH stand at lunchtime.

Please let me know of other such local and county history conferences or events where you live so that we can arrange for BALH to be represented there too with a stall. If you are able to put our some of BALH's new leaflets in your record office or local history library, etc, please contact me.

Gill Draper, development@balh.org.uk



extra pictures!

supplied by our contributors, so a shame not to share them ...

Boy scouts in action (see article p 6)

below: Ambulance team and stretcher bearers, Messengers
right: poster drawn by Baden-Powell

© The Scout Association, Heritage Department reproduced with permission



(above) embroidered postcard (see article p 13)

(right) Excavating a burial chamber at St George's Church, Canterbury
(see KAS news p 22)



County Societies Symposium

Jane Howells

'Responding to 21st Century Challenges' was the task taken on by this year's County Societies Symposium which met at the Institute of Historical Research on 17 September. Organised by the Victoria County History, BALH, and the Royal Historical Society, this event takes place every two years and provides an opportunity for representatives from organisations around the country to raise issues and share ideas.

Two papers in the first session, chaired by John Beckett, focused on the problem of funding. John Hudson, Head of Publishing at Historic England, asked if crowd-funding could provide an answer to financing historical/heritage publishing. HE has developed a new service for the heritage sector wishing to publish, in conjunction with the crowd-funding publisher Unbound. Using a platform such as this gives authors access to local people willing to offer finance and to editorial and marketing expertise.

James Bowen described the ways in which the re-launch of VCH Shropshire had sought financial support for continuing work on Big Red Books and on the production of VCH Shorts. The latter were particularly effective for engaging local societies, had realistic time scales and fundraising targets, and could be actively promoted to raise the profile of the VCH in the area. A particular need was to secure resources for volunteer management, to exploit local skill and enthusiasm and direct it towards a professional product.

Session two was chaired by Claire Cross. Gill Draper, BALH Development Officer, had been engaged on behalf of the Association with Historic England's project 'Assessing the Value of Community Generated Research'. This had revealed that historians and archaeologists do not always use the same language! Much was achieved by applying goodwill to overcome what was in essence a culture clash of different attitudes and approaches. The results showed, amongst much else, the wide array of outputs and challenge of valuing such diversity. The report may be found at

<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/research-resources/assessing-community-generated-research/>

Jessica Lutkin examined the lessons learned from attempts to involve local history societies as active participants in the England's Immigrants 1330-1550 project (www.england-simmigrants.com). The failure of almost all the societies approached to engage with the project again highlighted difficulties of communication and understanding. In contrast where schools had been provided with material directly related to the syllabus the relationship with teachers had been very positive. These experiences had resulted in positive proposals for the future.

With Vanessa Harding in the chair after lunch, Gill Cookson, President of the Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society, explained how financial problems had forced that society to undertake major restructuring that included depositing their archives and library at the University of Leeds, putting their 18th century building up for sale, reviewing all their activities as a society, and changing their name. There are already benefits to this positive approach to 'embracing change' that will see the society's future assured. www.yas.org.uk

The delegates then divided into 3 discussion groups lead by Adam Chapman (VCH Central Office), John Beckett (University of Nottingham) and John Chandler (VCH Gloucestershire). Reports were fed back to a plenary session made it clear that many people felt their societies had concerns, and opportunities, in common. These included countering an ageing membership; making contact with less-well-represented parts of their communities; using different forms of communication including social media; identifying your 'locality' or 'region' (how relevant today is the label 'county?'); relationships between academic and grassroots local historians; the overlapping interests of different groups in an area, including the role of umbrella organisations; resources for independent scholars; the contrasts between societies operating in urban and rural areas; the potential value of a structure for networking between county and other organisations; and much more. The contributors' slides and /or notes will be available on www.balh.org.uk

Thanks are due to the planning committee of Claire Cross and Gill Draper from BALH, and Adam Chapman and Rebecca Read from VCH for a very successful day.

BALH Publications Awards 2016

Alan Crosby

The BALH Publications Awards have been going since the mid-1990s. They are intended to recognise the excellent and innovative work of local historians published in county, local and regional journals, which deserves to be brought to wider attention. There's always a wealth of material to choose from—in the four issues of *The Local Historian* which appeared in 2015, a total of 159 journals and newsletters were listed; that means about 900 journal articles from which Sarah Rose, our Reviews Editor, selects a long-list of up to eight 'long' articles and eight 'short' ones. I then copy these, send them to two separate panels of readers, and ask them to rank the articles in order of preference.

What are our criteria for judging? First, there is the technical quality—the fluency and quality of the writing; the reliability of referencing and/or provision of bibliographies; the balance between 'fact' and 'analysis or interpretation'; and the appropriate use of secondary sources. Second, there is the wider picture: is the article innovative and imaginative in its choice of subject matter? does it take a familiar topic from a new perspective, or an unfamiliar topic which breaks new ground? does the author show that he or she is aware of current thinking among historians more generally? is it likely to encourage other local historians to look at a comparable subject in their own localities? We also consider the readership: is the article interesting, stimulating, lively and accessible?

Of course, not all papers can satisfy this alarming list of attributes—indeed, can any paper ever be regarded as perfect? But we look for these qualities and all of those shortlisted have them to a considerable extent. Why are some therefore placed less highly? Comments from the readers suggest that excessive length can be a problem—a good subject, imaginative approach and fluent writing may be marred by overloading with the fine minutiae of a subject, meaning broader themes and key conclusions are less easily differentiated from the evidence. Another problem sometimes identified is that the author does not seem fully aware of other work already published on the same topic.

Ultimately someone has to win and all have to be ranked, so we're always aware that in the end this is an inevitably subjective judgment. That's why the panels of readers are drawn as widely as possible, from professional local and regional historians, via people who've just completed local history courses and qualifications, to others who have been past winners of awards so demonstrating excellence in their own work.

This year's winners clearly demonstrated the attributes which I've outlined above. Andrew Watkins, who has just retired as head of history at Lichfield Cathedral School, won the 'long article' award with his analysis of a single (though splendid) sixteenth-century probate inventory, setting its evidence firmly in a local and regional context but also highlighting the wider historical background. Probate inventories are a standard source, but this paper (published in the October issue of *The Local Historian*) goes far beyond the usual level of analysis and in its emphasis on context is a model. One of the judges, a highly-experienced historian of the early modern period, said 'Quite excellent, an exemplary article ... based on an extensive range of primary sources, deeds, court rolls, tax assessments etc. as well as inventories, and in addition demonstrates a very good knowledge of the recent secondary sources. It is very wide ranging and sets the topic in the context of late medieval and early modern English history ... its presentation is scholarly throughout, but it is still accessible to the general reader ... will provide excellent material for comparative studies where similar documents can be found'.

Marian Morrison's 'short article' on the provision of healthcare in the collieries of County Durham, was based on an original paper which she wrote as a result of attending classes in local history, run by Dorothy Hamilton and researching the coal industry. It's great to see that local classes can produce innovative work—this paper, modest in length, uses accessible readily-available evidence to challenge some of the popular images of exploitative coal-owners, giving new perspectives on a very familiar theme in nineteenth-century local history.

Preston's very own cathedral

Alan Crosby

Thank you, Pope Francis, may you be ever blessed. You have raised the city of Preston even higher and given it a distinction unique in the whole of Europe. Though not a native of the city I write as a resident for over thirty years, one who in 2012 was made an honorary burgess, a title of which I am immensely proud. This is my city, in which I am well pleased.

Preston became a city in 2002, to mark Her Majesty's golden jubilee. There are four other cities in the County Palatine of Lancashire: in order of receiving the title, they are Manchester, Liverpool, Salford and Lancaster. There's a very widespread misconception that a city must have a cathedral, and that every place with a cathedral is a city. But it doesn't work like that. Manchester and Liverpool have Anglican cathedrals, but the former only achieved city status in 1853, six years after the creation of its diocese, though for Liverpool elevation as a city and the formation of the diocese both took place in 1880. Salford became a city in 1926 and Lancaster in 1937, but neither has an Anglican cathedral, whereas Blackburn, Preston's arch-enemy ten miles along the road, has been the seat of an Anglican diocese since 1927, but remains merely a borough.

But it becomes more complicated, for both Salford and Lancaster have Catholic cathedrals (their dioceses being created in 1850 and 1924 respectively) as of course does Liverpool, where the Catholic diocese predates the Anglican by thirty years. To sum up thus far, there are three Anglican and three Catholic cathedrals in the County Palatine of Lancaster, and one of these, Blackburn, is in a place which isn't a city. But is any of this unusual? There are, after all, 43 Anglican cathedrals in England, Wales and the Isle of Man, and 22 Catholic cathedrals. They're two a penny, really.

But Preston ... ah, Preston ... now has a cathedral of its very own. And not just any commonplace Anglican or Catholic one. Oh no, very far from it! A good pub quiz question might be 'What do Melbourne, Australia; the Chicago suburb of Bellwood; and Preston, Lancashire, have in common'? The answer is

that each has a cathedral of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church of the Eastern Rite. Indeed, they are the only three places in the world outside India with that distinction. In July this year Pope Francis proclaimed that the church of St Ignatius in Preston, which closed in 2014 and reopened a year later with an Indian Catholic congregation, would become the Cathedral Church of St Alphonsa and that Preston would be the seat of the Syro-Malabar Eparchy of Great Britain. Alphonsa was a slightly alarming Franciscan nun from Kerala, born in 1910, died in 1946, and canonised by Pope Benedict XVI in 2008 as the first female Indian saint. And isn't Eparchy a wonderful word?

The first Bishop of the Preston-based Eparchy, also known as the See of Circumscription (I love it!), was appointed at the same time: 'Dr Fr Joseph (Benny Mathew) Srampickal, a member of the clergy of the Eparchy of Palal,



and Vice-Rector of the Collegio De Propaganda Fide in Rome'. What a glorious translation, what a step up in the world, to leave behind the tired and humdrum provinciality of Rome and to come to Preston, celestial city on the Ribble. To swap the miserable architecture and pitiless sunshine of the Vatican, for the magnificence of our now-listed 1960s' Brutalist bus station and our refreshing showers and invigorating westerly breezes. Oh, Bishop Scamper, the Holy Father has undoubtedly done you a good turn!

BALH Visit to the Library of the Institute of Historical Research (IHR), University of London

This guided visit on 12 July, organized by the BALH's development officer, Gillian Draper, gave attendees an opportunity to learn about and familiarize themselves with the excellent research facilities for local and regional historians from all parts of the UK the IHR offers.

The IHR is one of the University of London's schools of advanced study. The collections in its library range from rare books, bibliographies, guides, poll-books, and reference works to the latest historical periodicals, almost all of which are stored and easily accessible on open shelves, with tables, comfortable seating and PC facilities and Wi-Fi access nearby. Its excellent local history room, housing collections primarily arranged on a county basis and currently shelved in readily moveable stacks, had been repeatedly relocated within Senate House in recent years to accommodate extensive renovation work – a process now complete.

The IHR librarian Matthew Shaw, assisted by Kate Wilcox and Brian Home, spoke about the Institute's history since its foundation in 1921, showing how it has remained at the centre of the study of academic history, nationally and internationally; supporting a wide range of postgraduate research training and seminars, publications and conferences, while also remaining at the forefront of projects to develop digital resources for historians. They highlighted the work of the Centre for Metropolitan History and the Victoria County

So, I'm sorry Salisbury. It was a nice try, Norwich. Good luck, Gloucester and heartfelt sympathies, Hereford. You have lowly dioceses but now Preston has an EPARCHY and thus (thank you again, Pope Francis) it has global significance. We local historians of Preston must get down to work, for a new chapter in the history of our city has been opened.

History, based at the IHR, and its regional and local history seminars - all familiar to many local historians. They had taken care to display reference works relevant to the known study areas of attendees. Guidance was provided on using the cataloguing system and the library tour extended beyond local collections and the practicalities of using library stacks and order slips to encompass the wide range of general biographic, statutory, ecclesiastic and colonial history collections the library holds, and their possible relevance to local historians. All this, plus an opportunity for individual research and access to rare sources unavailable locally, made this an excellent taster of the opportunities that IHR membership can offer local historians and a most useful BALH event. For further information see <http://www.history.ac.uk>. A virtual tour of the library is available with Google.

M Escott



An attentive audience listening to Gill Draper's presentation at the County Societies Symposium (see page 31 for a full report)

Notes News Issues

Jane Howells

New BALH leaflet

Enclosed with this mailing you will find a copy of our new general leaflet. We hope you will agree that it is eye-catching and informative. You might notice that it no longer mentions specific dates for events, so we have been able to benefit from a larger print run. Please will all members reading this give the leaflet to a friend who is not yet a member, or show it to their local society, or take it to their library, museum or record office. If you can suggest an opportunity to circulate it more widely please get in touch.

E-newsletter

Those on the E-mailing list will have noticed that you did not receive a copy of the BALH E-newsletter in September. This has been temporarily suspended while its role and content are reviewed. We would like to thank all previous contributors and Jacquie Fillmore for editing it. We would be happy to receive comments from members on how this form of communication with members should be developed.

News needed

Please would all societies check that their newsletters are being sent to our new office address in Macclesfield (see below). We appreciate that groups are increasingly changing to electronic newsletters to save postage costs. If this is the case with you, please ensure that BALH is added to the electronic mailing list – email address: editor.lhn@balh.org.uk. We are always interested to hear what our members and their societies are doing.

Local History Day 2107

Booking information, and a form, for Local History Day in 2017 will be in the next mailing at the end of January. Please be sure that Saturday 3 June is in your diary. The BALH annual lecture will be given by Professor Christopher Dyer (pictured on p 14 at VCH Gloucestershire event). Details of the rest of the programme are still being finalised, and will be on the website as soon as possible. The venue is Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, N7 6PA – it is not at all difficult to find! www.resourceforlondon.org

BALH website

Have you looked at our website recently? You can buy books, sign up for events and renew your subscription online. Do encourage your friends to become members via the website - it is very straightforward. The section on Local History and the First World War (in the Education pages) is growing as more material is published - such as the regular articles in *LHN*. Also in the Education section is a page of presentation material that has been made available by BALH people and third-party speakers at our events. It is very useful to be able to access these to check details, even if you heard them speak. Digitised back issues of *The Local Historian* are being added regularly, as the scanning project progresses. Our first e-book is in production, and there are plans for some type of new discussion forum.



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BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

REGISTERED CHARITY 285467

www.balh.org.uk

The British Association for Local History (BALH) was created in 1982 as the successor to earlier organisations which had supported the study of local history over previous decades. Its purpose is

**to encourage and assist the study of local history throughout Great Britain
as an academic discipline and as a rewarding leisure pursuit
for both individuals and groups.**

To achieve this the Association

- serves as the national body representing local and regional historians
- hosts Local History Day, an annual event open to all, with discussions, presentation of awards, AGM, and a specially commissioned lecture based on current research
- publishes the prestigious quarterly journal *The Local Historian* which includes regular features on themes, sources, websites, and a copious reviews section
- produces a quarterly members' magazine *Local History News* reporting on up to date developments and examples of best practice from around the country
- makes annual awards to individuals who have made a significant contribution to local history; for excellence in research and publication; and for an outstanding local society newsletter
- organises guided visits to places of relevant interest, often not easily accessible otherwise
- collaborates with other organisations to arrange conferences and similar events around the country
- provides a website for information and links
- publishes specialist handbooks.

The Association is an unincorporated registered charity, governed by an elected Council with three advisory committees dealing with publications, education and events. It is financed by its members. Subscriptions are for a calendar year but may be started at any time; new members receive the material already issued during the year.

Individual	£30.00
Student on a full- or part-time course in local history	£25.00
Local society or group	£65.00
Institutions	£38.00
Overseas	£42.50
School	£25.00

(Libraries subscribing to *The Local Historian* via agents are treated as Institutional members)

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Penton watercolour of Ipswich, see article p 9



Coat of Arms and Pedigree of Moreton family of Cheshire - certified copy of 1698 doc - from Thorold Brodies solicitors in Maidstone (2855) see article from British Records Association p 12



See p 20



Scouts working in the fields, see p 6

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One of the embroidered postcards from France see article p 13



Local History News

NUMBER 121 AUTUMN 2016

www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

Events 2017

29 April **Conference – Exeter** BALH in association with Devon History Society and the University of Exeter and Plymouth

3 June **London – Local History Day** (see page 35)

BALH will be represented at

West Surrey Family History Fair, Woking 5 November 2016
Who Do You Think You Are? Live. NEC Birmingham 6 – 8 April 2017
Yorkshire Family History Fair 24 June 2017

Details of events and booking arrangements are available as soon as they are confirmed.
Check our website for the latest information and availability

www.balh.org.uk/events

Please get in touch if you would like to suggest a visit destination in your area.

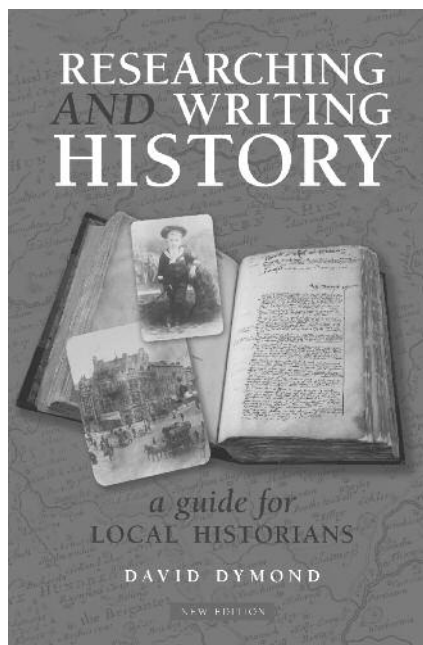
Guided Visits are designed for small groups to visit less accessible places and collections; booking forms for these, and all other events, with full details and prices are available on our website or from

BALH(V) Chester House, 68 Chestergate, Macclesfield SK11 6DY

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



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New edition of David Dymond's **RESEARCHING AND WRITING HISTORY** A guide for local historians

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analysing and interpreting evidence; writing; historical perspectives and methods; and ways to present and publish the finished product. Using examples and exercises the author guides the reader through the whole process. Written with humour and understanding, and attractively illustrated, this book is an enjoyable and fascinating introduction to the subject, especially useful to those who enjoy local history but wish to write and possibly publish, and to students on local history courses who want authoritative guidance on the preparation of dissertations and theses.

SPECIAL OFFER: BALH members can purchase this invaluable guide at just **£10** per copy (normal cover price £12.99), **plus £1.50** towards P&P to any UK address. To obtain your copies all you need to do is fill in the form below, or ring a nice friendly person on 01524 840111, or visit www.carnegiepublishing.com, quoting code BALHDD.

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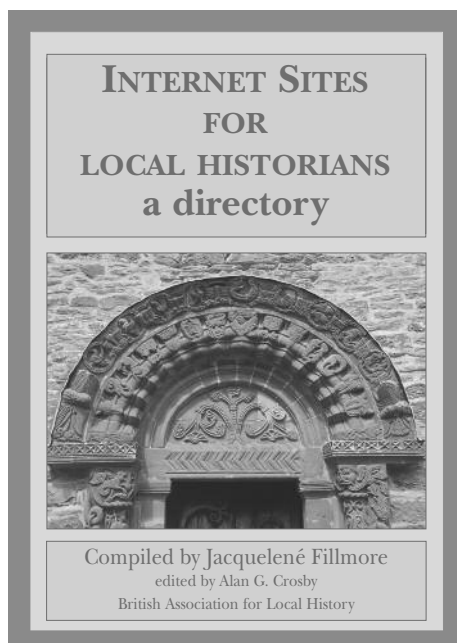
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INTERNET SITES FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS: a directory



*Compiled by Jacquelené Fillmore and edited by Alan Crosby
for the British Association for Local History*

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*Please take time to read the instructions on the membership renewal form. You need to complete the address box on the form **ONLY IF YOUR MAILING ADDRESS HAS CHANGED**.*

For society officers such as Hon. Treasurers, please give the address to which BALH publications and information are to be mailed.

If you mislay or can't find the printed renewal form for 2017, you can download a membership application from the BALH website and use this to renew your subscription. Remember to include your unique reference number, personal name or society name, payment or (for electronic payment) payment details.

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