

Local History News

Number 123 Spring 2017

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

See article p 11

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How to contribute

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

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

Local History News relies on material - articles, news, pictures, questions etc - from local societies and individual local historians. Please put BALH 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.

**admin@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
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Local History News

Number 123 Spring 2017

Matera transformed - Alan Crosby went to Italy	4
Transport & logistics in the First World War - Chris Phillips writes the next in our series on local history and World War 1	5
VCH online - Angus Winchester is our guide	7
BALH awards 2016 - profile of Mike Chitty	8
Community Archive & Heritage Group	9
Michael Farrar remembered by Evelyn Lord	10
Historical pageants - Ellie Read on The Redress of the Past project	11
Town maps for local historians - introduction to Historic Towns Atlas project	13
Sun Insurance online - from Isobel Watson	15
Online maps from the National Library of Scotland - thanks to HADAS	17
A mystery building - can you help?	18
Islands of Kent part 2 - Paul Carter guides us around Thanet	19
Promise and perils of searching online - a warning from Brian Thomson	20
News from Societies	22
Museums	24
Archives	25
Education	27
Book reviews	30
Guided Visit to Parliamentary Archives	31
Vandalism! - Alan Crosby finds <i>TLH</i> in danger	32
BALH Trustees' Report 2016	33
Notes News Issues	35
BALH Officers and Committees	36

Centre pages

Events • Local History Day booking • AGM

Membership Matters

Inside back cover

Matera transformed

Alan Crosby

In 1935-6 a 33-year-old Italian Jewish doctor, Carlo Levi, was sentenced to internal exile in Lucania, the impoverished province (now known as Basilicata) in the instep of Italy, between the toe of Calabria and heel of Puglia. He had offended the Fascist regime. Fifteen years later, when Fascism was history, Mussolini had been hung from a lamp-post, and Italy was a democratic state (all things being relative), Levi wrote a compelling memoir of his exile. *Christ stopped at Eboli* tells the story of an enforced sojourn in the villages of Gagliano and Grassano, perched among the eroded, twisted gorges and mountains, where (as the title suggests) conventional Christianity had scarcely gained a foothold - though the proliferating bureaucratic tentacles of the Italian state were very apparent. The filthy housing, primitive cooking and non-existent hygiene, ancient peasant beliefs and folk remedies that long predated the limited influence of the priest, and medieval systems of vendetta and brigandage are vividly portrayed.

Levi's sister Luisa, a doctor, was allowed to visit him, travelling down from Turin to see her brother for four days. She described to him her horror on seeing Matera, the nearest large town. There, unknown to the wider world, tens of thousands of people, most of them ravaged by endemic malaria, passed troglodytic lives in cave-dwellings (*right*) carved into the limestone cliffs of the gorge of the Gravina river. 'Of children', she said, 'I saw an infinite number. They appeared from everywhere, in the dust and heat, amid the flies, stark naked or clothed in rags. I have never in all my life seen such a picture of poverty ... children with the wizened faces of old men, their bodies reduced by starvation almost to skeletons'. Her description is harrowing and shocking.

Fast forward 85 years. In 2019 Matera, now capital of Basilicata, will be European Capital of Culture, following in the footsteps of (*inter alia*) Athens, Florence, Dublin and Liverpool.

It's scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast with Luisa's hellish town of desperation and destitution.

We were there in October. A frenzied pre-2019 makeover was under way. The winding lanes and giddy flights of narrow steps climbing the side of the gorge are paved with marble. Intimate little restaurants serving delicious local food are tucked away under arches and in whitewashed courtyards. Bijou galleries are interspersed with designer apartments and boutique hotels, converted from the tumble-down hovels which Luisa saw. No donkeys now plod filthy muck-covered streets, and no dying children lie on doorsteps and pavements ... but of tourists 'I saw an infinite number'.

Matera is a city transformed. Or is it? Raising my eyes from marble paving and the information boards of the tourist trail I saw, along the side of the gorge beyond the reach of tourist money and EU grants, the derelict remains of the old town, from which the last residents



were compulsorily removed in the 1960s—hundreds of black sightless holes in cliff terraces, the cave-dwellings which were inhabited within my lifetime, their paths and lanes weed-infested and rubbish-strewn, tiny garden plots overgrown with bushes. As a tourist one may visit a cave-dwelling reconstructed in the style of the early-

twentieth century, complete with life-sized stuffed donkey in the corner (they shared the house with the humans). Only a few hundred yards away are the sinister black holes, the real houses, abandoned for over half a century, home of the desperate people described in the book. That, from one perspective, is the real local history of the 'genuine' Matera ... but from another, the 'cave experience' with recorded English soundtrack is no less a part of the local history of that extraordinary place.

Keeping the war moving: researching WW1 transport and logistics

Christopher Phillips

Railway network operations in Britain and France were crucial to the supply chain that fed the British war machine. In 1921, journalist Edwin Pratt produced a two volume reference work that remains the largest source of information on the British railways during the war¹ It provides much detail on the contributions of individual British railway companies to the war effort, and was distilled in 1947 by J.A.B. Hamilton.² In recent years, Pratt's work has been augmented by texts on the work of a number of the country's leading companies.³ The broad narrative of each is focused upon developments in Britain, rather than on developments immediately behind the troops on the front line.

The key text for British work in foreign fields remains Ian M. Brown's *British Logistics on the Western Front*.⁴ Brown argues that the British Army's operational proficiency in the second half of the war – the apex of its so-called 'learning curve' – could not have been achieved without superb leadership in the field of logistics. Brown's text has provided the foundation for the discussion of logistics in the few general histories of the conflict that have paid the subject more than a cursory glance, and sits alongside Colonel Henniker's contribution to the official history as an indispensable overview of transportation on the Western Front.⁵ However, despite recent trends towards a more globalised considera-

tion of the conflict, understanding the role played by transportation in the 'sideshow' theatres is at an embryonic stage. The post-war chronicles of developments in Egypt and Mesopotamia await updates based on archival research,⁶ whilst Rhys Crawley's detailed examination of the August offensives at Gallipoli in 1915 offers a blueprint for future investigations of transport's influence over the military's operational decision-making processes.⁷

Individual components of the supply network have also been the subject of published accounts, through histories of the units of the army that were involved in the provision of transport, and as studies of the modes of transport themselves.⁸ Some of these works, such as those by Aves, Young, Davies, and Taylorson, are as important as reference works and databases of archival holdings as they are narratives of their subjects' wartime experiences. They provide an excellent starting point for those seeking to pursue research into individual units; particularly for those whose research requires consultation of the myriad war diaries held at the National Archives.

The diaries of individual transport units provide variable quantities of information. Some are little more than bald statements of the location of the unit and its commanding officer(s) at infrequent intervals, whilst others furnish the reader with a day-by-day account of the unit's work and offer tantalising glimpses into the character, mood, and ethos of the men within the regiment. However, references to specific men, particularly other ranks, are comparatively rare, as are published works by those who served in transport units. James Agate provided a vivid account of his life as a captain in



An ambulance wagon of the 42nd (East Lancashire) Division, Gully Ravine, Helles, showing the mud after a storm November 1915. IWM Q13642

the Army Service Corps (a far cry from his day job as theatre critic for the *Manchester Guardian*), and T.R. Heritage showed that service for those immediately behind the front line was one of hard work, dangerous encounters, and great comradeship. Of many senior executives of Britain's railways drawn into the higher administration of the conflict, only Sir Sam Fay published an account of his wartime experiences.⁹

A difficulty associated with research into the transport and logistics personnel in the war revolves around the relative normality of their experience. In many cases, these were men whose wartime service involved doing similar jobs to those they performed in peacetime. W.J. Hill, a guard on the London and North-Western Railway before and after the war, remarked frequently in his recollections about the extent to which the support systems behind the British Army resembled those in England.¹⁰ Perhaps relatively few transport and supply personnel believed 'their war' to have been sufficiently noteworthy to justify being recorded for posterity after the war. Fortunately, as Alison Kay's research guide in the Autumn 2013 *Local History News* hinted,¹¹ and the recent popular texts on individual railway companies have demonstrated, staff magazines of the various British railways, the trade press, and the archival materials held at repositories such as the Liddle Collection and Imperial War Museum assist us to understand those who kept the army supplied, and how they made sense of their contribution to a war of unimaginable scale.

Dr Christopher Phillips is a Lecturer in History at Leeds Trinity University.

1 E.A. Pratt, *British Railways and the Great War: Organisation, Efforts, Difficulties and Achievements*, 2 vols (London: Selwyn & Blount, 1921).

2 J.A.B. Hamilton, *Britain's Railways in World War I* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1947).

3 See, for example, D. Gould, *The South-Eastern and Chatham Railway in the 1914-18 War* (Trowbridge: Oakwood, 1981); S. Gittins, *The Great Western Railway in the First World War* (Stroud: History Press, 2010); R. Langham, *The North Eastern Railway in the First World War* (Stroud: Fonthill Media, 2015).

4 I.M. Brown, *British Logistics on the Western Front, 1914-1919* (London: Praeger, 1998).

5 A.M. Henniker, *History of the Great War. Transportation on the Western Front, 1914-1918* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1937).

6 G.E. Badcock, *A History of the Transport Services of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, 1916-1917-1918* (London: Hugh Rees, 1925); L.J. Hall, *The Inland*



Canadian railway troops and Chinese labourers constructing a cutting at Lapugnoy, March 1918.
IWM Q10733

Water Transport in Mesopotamia (London: Constable & Co., 1921).

7 R. Crawley, *Climax at Gallipoli: The Failure of the August Offensive* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2014). See also K. Roy, 'From Defeat to Victory: Logistics of the Campaign in Mesopotamia, 1914-1918', *First World War Studies*, 1:1 (2010), 35-55.

8 For the former, see W.A.T. Aves, *The Railway Operating Division on the Western Front: The Royal Engineers in France and Belgium, 1915-1919* (Donington: Shaun Tyas, 2009); R.H. Beadon, *The Royal Army Service Corps: A History of Transport and Supply in the British Army*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931), II; M. Young, *Army Service Corps, 1902-1918* (London: Leo Cooper, 2000). For the latter, see W.J.K. Davies, *Light Railways of the First World War: A History of Tactical Rail Communications on the British Fronts, 1914-18* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1967); K. Taylorson, *Narrow Gauge at War*, 2 vols (Croydon: Plateway, 1987); A. Roden, *Trains to the Trenches: The Men, Locomotives and Tracks That Took the Armies to War 1914-18* (London: Aurum Press, 2014).

9 J.E. Agate, L. of C. (*Lines of Communication*): *Being the Letters of a Temporary Officer in the Army Service Corps* (London: Constable & Co., 1917); T.R. Heritage, *The Light Track from Arras: A Descriptive Account of the Activities of the 19th and 31st Light Railway Companies, Royal Engineers during the World War* (London: Heathfield, 1931); S. Fay, *The War Office at War* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1937). The working papers of Sir Guy Granet also survive, and are held at the Modern Records Centre, University of Warwick.

10 Brotherton Library, Liddle Collection, Papers of Sapper W.J. Hill, LIDDLE/WW1/GS0767 Recollections of France and the LRs during the Great War, 1914-1919.

11 A. Kay, 'The Railwaymen Who Went to War: Stories Held at the National Railway Museum', *Local History News*, 109 (2013) <<http://www.balh.org.uk/publications/local-history-news/local-history-news-number-109-autumn-2013>>.

Finding the VCH online

Angus Winchester

In counties which possess them, the big red books of the Victoria County History (VCH) are often the starting point for anyone seeking accurate, definitive information about the history of a particular place. Handsome and meaty volumes, they remain the flagships of the VCH project and continue to be published as research is completed. However, people seeking reference material increasingly expect to find it online, so making the fruits of VCH research available online while maintaining the gold standard 'red books' is one of the challenges facing the VCH in the twenty-first century. In fact, much VCH research is already available at the click of a mouse but it is scattered across several different websites. I thought it might be helpful to provide a very brief guide.

The full texts of most VCH volumes – especially the 'topographical' volumes which contain the histories of individual parishes – are available on the huge (and extremely rich and varied) British History Online (BHO) website (www.british-history.ac.uk/): over 160 of the red books published so far will be found there. You may well have hit on VCH material on this site without realising it: if you google 'history' and the name of a parish covered by VCH, the online version on BHO usually comes near the top of the list. BHO should therefore be your first port of call if you know that an account of the place you are interested in has been published by VCH. Many of the early volumes (which include the thematic 'general' volumes) are also available on the Internet Archive website (<https://archive.org/>) and the Hathi Trust Digital Library (<https://www.hathitrust.org/>). You can find them by going to the sites and searching for 'Victoria History of the county of'.

New VCH parish histories continue to be drafted. The project is a partnership between the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London (which publishes the red books and maintains the BHO website) and organisations across the English shires which fund VCH research and writing locally.

Currently, VCH work is under way in seventeen counties. As parish histories are completed, drafts are often posted online on the VCH's own website (<https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/>). Go to the 'Counties' page; click on the county in which you are interested; and then on 'Work in Progress'. You'll find draft parish histories on the 'Work in Progress' pages for Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Leicestershire, Middlesex & London, Nottinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Somerset, Wiltshire and Yorkshire West Riding. One county, Cumbria, posts its draft articles on the website of the body which part-funds its work, the Cumbria County History Trust (<http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/>). On its 'Places' pages you'll find links to completed drafts and also brief gazetteer entries on the history of every parish in the county.

Finally, even where parish histories have not yet been drafted, the VCH offers online access to a wealth of local historical materials. Its 'VCH Explore' website (<https://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/>), which originated in the 'England's Past for Everyone' project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund from 2005 to 2010, contains collections of images, maps and transcripts of documents for places in many VCH-active counties across the Midlands and the South.

The publishing world is changing rapidly. Looking to the future, it will clearly be imperative that VCH research is available online and that it exploits the increasingly exciting possibilities of electronic publishing. Most researchers – and not just the younger generation – expect to find it there. But there will still be a call for print publication, not only the traditional 'big red books' but the histories of individual places now published by the VCH as attractive freestanding paperbacks.

Angus Winchester is Editor of the Victoria County History.



Appreciation, understanding, involvement

Jane Howells

Mike Chitty is unique in the 15 year history of BALH Awards for Personal Achievement in being nominated by *two* societies, with whom he has had a long and productive association. Mike is a founder member of **The Wavertree Society** which began in 1977; in 1982 he moved house from one 'former Lancashire village surrounded by suburban Liverpool' to another, and joined **The Gateacre Society** which had been founded in 1974.

Industrial archaeology was an early enthusiasm which developed while Mike was a student at Exeter University. He became a local government statistician specialising in census analysis, but never looked at data with blinkered eyes. Wherever he was, the physical and social histories of his surroundings were important. In 1973 he moved to Liverpool as a member of the Joint Structure Plan team set up in anticipation of the new Merseyside Metropolitan County, and has been in the area ever since, retiring from Sefton Borough Council's planning department in 2008.

Mike's skill at sharing his interests began at an early stage. He wrote *Industrial Archaeology of Exeter*, a self-guided walk telling the story of the city's paper mills, breweries and transport infrastructure, in 1971. Three years later, with colleagues at the North-Western Society for Industrial Archaeology and History, he produced a gazetteer *A guide to the Industrial Heritage of Merseyside*. His 1999 publication *Discovering Historic Wavertree: Village and Garden Suburb*, set out as a series of walks around two conservation areas, 'provides a firm foundation for anyone, academic, professional or interested layman, wishing to get to know Wavertree's history and buildings', as one of his referees wrote.

As one of the first qualified Blue Badge Guides on Merseyside, he was part of a process few anticipated, that within 20 years or so, tourism would become the city of Liverpool's main growth industry, and heritage would be recognised as one of its major economic assets.

For both the Wavertree and Gateacre Societies Mike is responsible for their newsletters, for their websites, their email links with individuals and other groups, and their efficient computer-based systems of administration. As they are primarily conservation/civic societies, Mike has been instrumental in leading their presentations to major planning inquiries. The aim is, as he says, 'to retain the historic character of these districts of Liverpool' and 'to make the case for the preservation and enhancement of features of local interest'. This has been done through correspondence, campaigning,



Merseyside local historian, author and broadcaster Ken Pye (left) presenting Mike Chitty with his BALH Award, September 2016

and exhibitions to raise public awareness. Communication is key and can take many forms. Mike has been personally involved with the Wavertree Society's series of 'green plaques' on heritage buildings, and with Gateacre's heritage lectern; this permanent interpretive panel on the village green was mentioned by a referee in these terms: 'probably one of the most direct ways to promote local history and to foster civic pride in the village'.

Sadly, Mike was unable to join us on Local History Day last June, but the BALH Award certificate was duly presented locally, by a most appropriate person.

With thanks to Mike Chitty, Brian Doman, Robert Zatz, Wendy Morgan, Sue Carmichael [see also p 14]

The Community Archive & Heritage Group

Susan Hampson

The Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) is a national group which aims to support and promote community archives in the UK and Ireland. We bring together bodies and organisations concerned with community archives and provide a forum for the regular exchange of views and information.

Since 2006, we have organised conferences both regionally and nationally, and run a website www.communityarchives.org.uk. We have also developed a set of cataloguing guidelines, digital preservation guidelines along with other resources especially tailored for community archives and we keep in touch with our members and others with a regular e-mail newsletter.



Audience at the 2015 conference

The beginnings of the Group came from the 2003 Community Access to Archives Project led and funded by The National Archives. In June 2009 CAHG was placed on a secure foundation and adopted a constitution. Membership is free and open to anyone. We have a dedicated team of committee members comprising professional archivists, representatives from national bodies including The National Archives, Historic England, and the Archive and Records Association, as well as small grassroots community archives.

In 2011 we awarded our first Community Archive and Heritage Awards, to celebrate the

importance of community archives and to promote best practice. Since the introduction of the awards the judging panel are constantly amazed by the innovation, diversity, enthusiasm and sheer passion that make up community archives. Without exception our award winners for each category are inspirational and are continuing to take community archives to the next level. The awards recognise the hard work carried out by volunteers researching in their local community and completing worthwhile projects. The following sample of the award winners shows how well they embraced the categories of inspiration and innovation.

Six Streets Local History Network.

<http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/organisation/six-streets-derby>

Six Streets Derby were an innovative project winner and a worthy example of the imaginative use of successful public engagement in community archiving projects. Curious local residents carried out their own census across 6 streets in Derby in 2011 inviting comparisons of how household demographics had changed in the 100 years since the 1911 census.

Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey

<http://www.medieval-graffiti.co.uk/index.html>

The Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey is a volunteer led project established in 2010 to undertake the first large scale systematic survey of early graffiti inscriptions in English churches. When the project started it was believed that early graffiti inscriptions were relatively rare; now it is clear that such inscriptions are present in over 65% of English churches. The scheme has spread to several other counties including Suffolk, Kent, East Sussex, Surrey, Lincolnshire, Hampshire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and is set to be rolled out to other areas.

Beyond The Point <http://www.beyondthepoint.co.uk>

Our youngest award winners were two young 16 year old boys who had put together a very inspirational website, Beyond The Point. They documented their 'explores' discovering areas not usually visited by mainstream local histo-

rians, often finding old derelict buildings and sites with historical interest to the area. Their enthusiasm came across on the website and they are now encouraging other young people to join them or add their own discoveries to the website. They regularly feature on the local radio station, in the local newspapers and are always coming up with new exciting projects.



Beyond The Point

We are in the process of judging the awards entries for 2017 and once again the standard of achievement is so high it will be a difficult to choose the winners.

Last year we were pleased to introduce an award for Sustained Achievement that celebrates groups who have continued to build their archives while improving or maintaining excellent standards across the board. We were able to award six community archives in 2016 and look forward to celebrating more Sustained Achievement awards in the future.

CAHG also runs several free events each year including at least one regional conference and a national conference. Our conferences are very popular and we have been very fortunate in attracting excellent keynote speakers, Michael Wood, Tristan Hunt and Lisa Jardine to name but a few. The regional conferences have reached Scotland, Portsmouth, Lancashire, Essex and Wiltshire. Our annual conference this year is to be held on Tuesday 11th July at University College London. Please see our website for details.



Michael Farrar 1929-2017

Michael Farrar was always a staunch supporter of local history, and an enthusiastic member of many local history organisations. After reading Classics at the University of Cambridge he took the UCL Diploma of Archive Administration, and worked in the Kent County Archives and at Plymouth before becoming Cambridgeshire County Archivist in 1961, where he remained in post until he retired in 1994.

Apart from his professional career he was always willing to give practical help to local and national local history associations. He served on the council of BALH, and until 2016 was treasurer of the Cambridgeshire Association for Local History and the Cambridgeshire Records Society, as well as being involved with many other organisations connected with archives and local history. His organisational skills for CALH extended to arranging the annual conference, and to providing speakers for the monthly meetings. BALH members will surely remember his presence at Local History Days, and his attention to detail in financial and constitutional matters. Many have benefitted over the years from the BALH Guided Visits he organised to a wide range of otherwise inaccessible places. His absence from meetings everywhere will leave a space which will be difficult to fill.

Evelyn Lord



A sunny day at the Chelsea Physic Garden, Autumn 2012, BALH members and friends on a guided visit there and to the Royal Horticultural Society Library, organised by Michael Farrar (second left). This is the only photograph I can find, from LHN, with Michael in it, he would never be in the limelight. JH

Historical Pageants: a new database for local historians

Ellie Read

The Redress of the Past is an AHRC-funded project about twentieth-century historical pageants. It has created a database of over 400 pageants, which are freely and publicly-accessible via the project website (www.historical-pageants.ac.uk). The project has sourced pageant history from library, museum, archive and online collections, and from local communities via public exhibitions, events, and oral history. Historical pageants have taken place all around Britain, so the project website and its database with clickable map is an important new resource for local historians.

The term 'pageant' may bring to mind a medieval mystery play performed on a pageant cart, a parade of decorated vehicles, a fancy-dress procession, or even a beauty contest, but in the twentieth century the 'historical pageant' became an event in which local people re-enacted episodes from their local history. Dating from 1905, this 'modern pageantry' was devised by musician and playwright Louis N. Parker (1852-1944), a former music master at Sherborne School, in Dorset. His ideas for the re-enacting of local history were realised when he staged a pageant to mark the twelfth century of St. Ealdhelm's founding of Sherborne. The success of the Sherborne Pageant sparked a craze that saw towns and cities across Britain eagerly organise similar events. The Bury St Edmunds Historical

Pageant of July 1907, staged by Parker at the invitation of the town, is a typical example.

The pageant was a dramatic representation of events over fifteen centuries and comprised seven episodes followed by a final tableau. It sought to show the events that shaped Bury St Edmunds and their significance to national history, so included stories of Boudicca, St Edmund, Abbot Samson, King John and Elizabeth I. Eighteen hundred people, most of them locals, made up the cast of 'pageanteers'.

Organising a pageant was a major undertaking, and that at Bury St Edmunds in 1907 was more than a year in preparation. Prestigious patrons and financial backers had to be recruited, publicity organized, historical sources consulted, and scenes devised. Furthermore, the script – as well as much of the music – also had to be written. Specially-constituted committees were established to organise the event, and an appeal for assistance was made to all parts of the local community. The Angel Hotel opposite the Abbey Gateway became the headquarters of the undertaking, and was known as 'Pageant House'. A local newspaper recorded that:

'Several hundreds of ladies and gentlemen from the town and country have been working most assiduously through the winter months, the spring, and right away practically up to the opening day, preparing designs, making costumes, weapons and all the many articles required for the representation...'

The pageant was performed in the town's Abbey Gardens – an historic site that provided a natural setting for the re-enactment. There, a 4000-seater grandstand was constructed. The script or 'book of words' was written by Pageant Master Louis Parker who cited 'numerous historical publications' as his sources and based much of Episode VI on a scene from Shakespeare's Henry VI, Part II. The pag-



Sir Benjamin Stone

'Caradoc and Britons', Warwick Pageant 1906

Caradoc and Britons, Warwick pageant 1906

event took three hours to perform and was repeated on 6 days, following 5 days of public dress rehearsals. Despite some terrible weather – rain being frequently a problem for page-



*Queen Elizabeth in her chair
Gloucester & Cheltenham*

ants – the event was deemed a success. Audience figures were such that the pageant made profit of £1044 (equivalent to at least £100,000 today) – a sum that was eventually assigned for the benefit of the Bury St Edmunds and West Suffolk Sanatorium.

The Redress of the Past database (accessed from the 'Pageant' tab on the website) provides a full profile of the 1907 Bury St Edmunds pageant. A search leads to an array of data including named committee members, a summary of the episodes and historical characters depicted as well as academic commentary on the history of the event.

The pageant database records over 60 pre-1914 pageants; Parker staged four other big pageants at Warwick, Dover, Colchester and York before largely retiring from the scene in 1909. Whilst some pageants were locally-organised amateur events, many larger towns and cities sought the assistance of a cadre of professional pageant masters who had come into existence to meet demand. One such individual was the flamboyant Frank Lascelles (1875-1934) who staged vast spectacles at home and abroad, earning him the epithet "the man who staged the Empire."

The Redress of the Past project has sought to investigate the previously neglected post-1914 civic historical pageants. The database holds details of over 180 interwar pageants. These pageants were remarkably diverse: the database includes examples of peace pageants, pageants staged by the Women's Institute and the co-operative movement, as well as smaller-scale church and village events. The 1930s also saw industrial cities put on large pageants to promote their local economy and stimulate a sense of community in the context of the Great Depression. World War II didn't bring an end to pageant making either: there are over 140 post-1945 pageants listed on the database, the 1951 Festival of Britain and Elizabeth II's 1953 coronation being the catalyst for many.

Some places staged several pageants during the century, potentially providing an insight into social change locally. The people of Bury St Edmunds performed two further historical pageants, the 'Bury St Edmunds Magna Carta Pageant' in 1959 and 'Edmund of Anglia' in 1970. The latter sparked some protest – in the form of a puppet show! – with at least some locals feeling that the pageant's subject-matter was irrelevant to late twentieth-century concerns. You can find out more on the 'featured pageants' section of the website.

Historical pageants are an interesting focus for local historians. Pageants can provide revealing insights into the history of villages, towns and cities, and because they involved large numbers of people, they make excellent subjects for family, community, and oral history projects. The Redress of the Past database is a good place to start, providing much information about individual pageants, but also a means of considering these local events in a wider context. To find out more visit www.historicalpageants.ac.uk

Ellie Reid is Local Studies Librarian, Oxfordshire History Centre ellie.reid@oxfordshire.gov.uk

www.historicalpageants.ac.uk



see also the front cover image of this issue

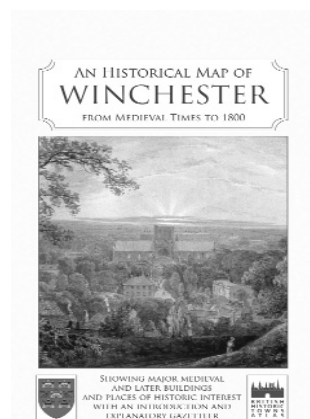
Town maps for local historians

Caroline Barron

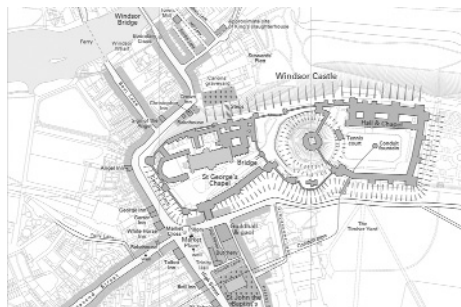
The Historic Towns Trust, which has now published eighteen historical atlases and maps of British towns, was founded in 1957 as part of the International Commission for the History of Towns. The Commission had been established in 1955 to encourage the production of a series of atlases of historic European Towns: their development was to be mapped to standard scales so that common patterns of topographic development might be compared, and common themes might emerge. The Commission included representatives from all European countries west of the Iron Curtain, but it extended also to Poland and Hungary. This drawing together of European countries in the aftermath of the Second World War found expression in a number of common ventures, of which the mapping of historic towns was one.

The methodology of the HTT atlases has been to compile a principal map, at the scale of 1:2500, based on the first properly surveyed map of the town (usually an Ordnance Survey map of the mid nineteenth century) and then to work backwards to show the medieval and later buildings which were still standing at that time, the sites of lost medieval buildings and numerous other features such as waterways, bridges, mills, gallows, wells and embankments. The result is a very detailed summary map of the historical development of a settlement. This principal map has then

been used — at a reduced scale — to form the background for a series of additional maps which show the town or city at key points in its development. By having a consistent background map and standardised symbology, it is possible to compare the topographic form of a town across many centuries in a way that is not otherwise easy to do.



Recent atlases have also included detailed gazetteers which explain the history and location of all the features shown on the maps, along with bibliographic details, allowing further research if so desired. These atlases also include substantial sections of illustrations (many historical engravings or early photographs, and reproductions of early maps) which help to convey a sense of the townscapes and built-form of the featured town. In addition to these substantial atlases, since 2008 the Trust has published separate historical town maps (new mapping showing historical development, rather than reproductions of old maps) and has plans to produce several more. These are very modestly priced (£8.99) and are easy to use, being folded maps in card covers, much like an OS map.

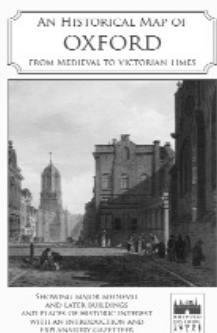


Windsor Castle

There are atlases or historical maps of the following towns and cities: Banbury, Bristol, Caernarvon, Cambridge, Coventry, *Eton, Glasgow, Gloucester, Hereford, *Hull, *London (before 1520), Norwich, Nottingham, *Oxford, Salisbury, *Winchester, *Windsor and *York. There are historical maps for the towns marked with an asterisk, although some of these are currently being reprinted or

re-issued. Atlases for many of the towns are now out of print, but their content (maps and text) are available on the website of the Historic Towns Trust and can be downloaded for free. See www.historictownsatlas.org.uk for details. The Trust is happy for the maps to be used as widely as possible but asks that permission is sought for reproduction in publications.

The Historic Towns Trust has embraced new technologies across its existence. The original atlases were bound into hard-back volumes usually containing several towns, but recent volumes have been produced as heavy-duty card portfolios which contain separate maps, illustration pages and a text fascicule. The fascicule includes an historical account of the town (with references, but written for a non-specialist reader) and a detailed gazetteer, along with a bibliography and explanatory notes. Also within the portfolio are the principal map, typically six to twelve maps showing the development of the town at different times, and the illustrations. Each atlas also contains a CD of PDF versions of the most important maps. Such rich resources have proved invaluable to local historians and the Trust is anxious to produce more atlas portfolios and folding maps — but the production of work of such quality requires expert local knowledge and financial resources.



The recent publication of the Historical Map of Kingston upon Hull is a new departure for the Trust. It is a map of the city based on an Ordnance Survey map — not of the mid nineteenth century, but of 1928 since the significant industrial development of Hull took place in the later part of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries. The map can thus show how the medieval city was overwhelmed by the prodigious nineteenth-century development of the docks and manufacturing industry and these, in turn, were overwhelmed by the German bombers of the Second World War. But the map is also an innovation since it is not based on a full Historic Towns Atlas, but is a stand-alone production. This was inspired by the selection of Hull as the UK City of Culture 2017 and by the expertise and enthusiasm of a team of local historians (David and Susan Neave, and D.E. Evans) working in conjunction with an historian from the University of Hull. The Marc Fitch Fund gave a generous grant towards the cost of the work and the Historic Towns Trust provided the skilled services of its cartographic editor, Giles Darkes. The resulting map is a revelation, even to those who thought they knew the city well. (see illustration on back cover of this issue of LHN)

The Historic Towns Trust is anxious to work with other local scholars and historians to produce historical maps of other towns, whether cities of culture or not. It is the aim of the Trust to do for British towns what Nikolaus Pevsner did for British counties: to enable us all not only to see the urban landscape around us, but to understand more fully how it came into being.

more illustrations to go with Mike Chitty's profile on page 8 ...



Committee members of the Wavertree Society at the end of the 'Discovering Historic Wavertree - 10 Years On' walk, July 2009. (L-R) Christina Clarke, John Wood, Robert Zatz (chairman), Irene Wilde, Mike Chitty



Committee members of the Gateacre Society with the heritage lectern on the village green, Aug 2008. (L-R) Beryl Plent, George Mason, Pam Ball, Mike Chitty, Rosemary Doman, Brian Doman, Eryl Chitty

Early fire insurance online: a country-wide resource

Isobel Watson

Many readers will already know that the 'Place in the Sun' project, which continues indexing the fire insurance policy abstracts of the Sun Fire Office, has created an online index to a run of its policy registers, to which finding aids are limited. This now extends to 220 volumes, covering the length and breadth of Great Britain, and represents more than 380,000 policies taken out between 1782 and 1842.

The project began in 2003 at Guildhall Library, with its main funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. This enabled the organisers, the London Archive Users' Forum, to recruit a part-time project manager and purchase the necessary laptops. In its initial 15-month life the aim was to index a mere 30 registers, chosen to focus on the period from 1815 onwards. There were two reasons for this. It was a particularly productive period for London building development, and at that time the Sun's principal series of registers mainly dealt with policies issued in London, so the London focus of the sponsoring group was appropriate. It is also a period that family historians find particularly frustrating, as before national registration began personal information can be hard to find.

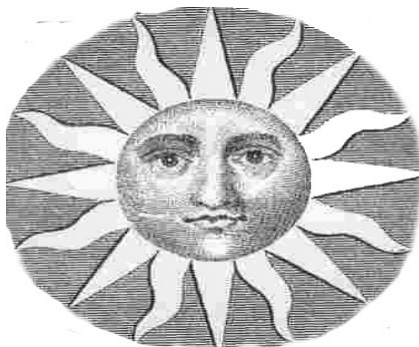
After the initial 15 months, funding of the manager's post was generously continued by Guildhall Library, and the work was overseen first by Susan Webb and later by Brenda Griffith-Williams. The run of registers was gradually added to at both ends, and for periods before 1793 (after which provincial policies were entered in a separate series of registers) the coverage therefore became country-wide. An index to 183 of the indexes in the series can also be found on the National Archives website as part of the Access to Archives (A2A) database: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk.

The project continues in the steady hands of a team of 9 volunteers, now working without formal funding, who are adding gradually to the body of registers indexed both from the 1780s backwards in time and from 1841 forwards, as the individual volunteer prefers. New indexes, up to 15 in a year, with an average content of 1700 policy abstracts in each, are added regularly to the corpus of work completed. The team could hardly operate without strong continuing support from members of staff, and in the form of replacement of computers by London Metropolitan Archives. This is where the project now lives (along with the policy registers, the rest of the

Royal and Sun Alliance deposited archive, the major national collection of British insurance records and a vast quantity of other business records).

The aim of the project is to open up the policy registers - which are organised numerically but not in strict sequence, and have no surviving contemporary indexes - for research, whether by family, business or local historians.

Access to a particular policy would otherwise require prior knowledge of the policy number, say from a fire mark on a building, or a title document. It does so by indexing the proper names of people, places and businesses found in the records, and also any identified occupations. The person who took out the policy, their address and occupation or status, and any special capacity in which they acted (such as executor, mortgagor or trustee) are included, along with any property covered by the policy which was located other than at the insured's address. The names and occupations of any third party occupiers of insured property are also noted, though there are more likely to be details about the policyholders themselves which bear on their lifestyle. The indexed information as to name, place and



occupation are associated with the volume number and policy number, and the date, from which the searcher can get access to the original register.

The policyholders, or indeed the occupiers of property, range from lords to laundresses; the property insured in a single policy may be £50 worth of a huckster's stock in trade, or the entire portfolio of public houses belonging to a brewery. Entries for the Bowes estate at Shadwell appear to list every occupier; in 1831, the Earl of Abergavenny insured vast landed estates area by area. The Sun registers have enabled a business's history to be reconstructed where the records of the firm itself have not survived.

Exceptionally, the index also captures named vessels, and works of art and literature, as these lend themselves to indexing. Otherwise, for descriptive details of what was insured, and for how much, and especially what chattels may have been covered by the policy, recourse has to be had to the register itself. Before 1800 (after which time plans, which haven't survived, were more often deployed) there can be excellent descriptions of large industrial premises. There is also lots of information about farms. Whether or not the property insured consists of buildings, the building materials used (which inform the fire risk) are often mentioned, and the taking out of a policy can be a particularly good proxy for dating a new or altered building. The remarkable thatching of Houghton Lodge, a large cottage orné on the River Test in Hampshire, was dated in this way.

The Sun was always active in London and the Home Counties, but before 1793 policies can be found from all over the island, and coverage seems to be particularly strong in the industrial north west, in Edinburgh and Glasgow, on the south coast and in the West Country (especially around Plymouth). That is not to say that other areas are not worth checking, though one sometimes suspects that eccentricities of spelling are even more noticeable in Cornwall, say, and in Wales. Even after that date, and for other areas, it's worth checking, as policies were recorded in the London series of registers if sold to visitors to London. While the project continues (and at present there are no plans for it not to), it can be worth revisiting the index regularly if updates may be significant.

Finding a policy is easy once the number and volume are known, and all the Sun policy registers (more than 1200 of them, more than half of which relate mainly to London), whether indexed or not, are available for consultation at LMA. A search on the LMA catalogue (to

find it, go to www.cityoflondon.gov.uk and follow the links) can usually be narrowed down to Sun policy material by including the word 'insured' as one of the search terms (in addition to the name of the policy holder or the address the policy relates to), and users are recommended to use wild cards in searching for places in the same way as they would for people, as the index adopts the spelling an address is given by the register itself, often different from an accepted modern one. Counties however, like trades and occupations, have their modern spellings in the index, and Scotland is now called Scotland, not North Britain (as the registers would have it). The registers themselves are not digitised, but LMA can supply scanned copies.

Note: the registers indexed so far are Ms 11936/306 to 580 (there are some gaps in the holdings). Other sponsors of the project apart from the HLF were Guildhall Library, Royal and Sun Alliance and the North West Kent Family History Society. The London Archive Users' Forum was wound up as part of the formation of Archives for London Ltd.

Museums at Night **17 – 20 May 2017**

All UK museums, galleries and heritage sites are encouraged to throw open their doors after hours to showcase their treasures in unexpected ways. Festival of Lates, headed by Culture 24 the Brighton-based arts charity, is dedicated to shining a light on Britain's culture and heritage. Search the website by region for events taking place in your area (including a wartime swing hangar dance at The Helicopter Museum, Weston-super-Mare).

<https://museumsatnight.org.uk>

Festival of British Archaeology **15 - 30 July 2017**

Events will be taking place throughout the country

www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk

Back issues in need of a home

Print copies of *The Local Historian* 32(1) - 35(1) Feb 2002-Feb 2005, and the associated *Local History News* Spring 2002 (62) - Spring 2005 (74). Contact mamac09@gmail.com if you need any of these to complete your collection.

National Library of Scotland a mapping resource for HADAS

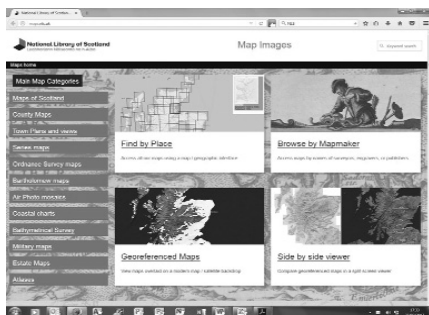
Roger Chapman

This article originally appeared in the Newsletter of Hendon & District Archaeological Society, October 2016. As it is 'a mapping resource for everyone' it is reprinted here with kind permission of the author and HADAS. In their Newsletter it had the advantage of larger page size and colour, so the illustrations are given here as a very rough guide - do follow the instructions, or simply explore the website.

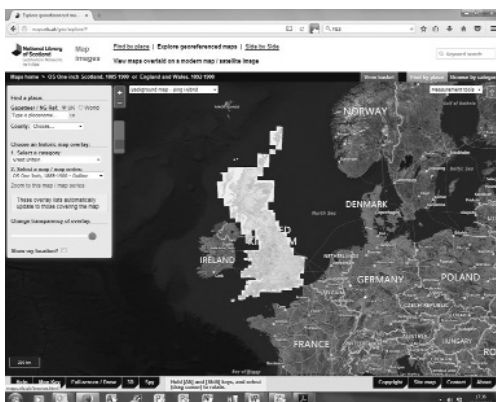
You might not think that the National Library of Scotland would be a good place to look for mapping resources for Barnet but currently I know of no better for historical map research of our area. The National Library of Scotland has over 150,000 high resolution historic map images. Naturally the focus is on Scotland but the collection includes detailed Ordnance Survey map series of England and Wales. It is also a collection that is growing and is worthwhile going back to from time to time. One of the features that I particularly like about this collection is the ability it gives to look at historical maps superimposed on to modern satellite photographs or mapping.

This article aims to explain how to go about this in a simple and straightforward manner. It will certainly give you hours of enjoyment on wet winter days looking at the changes that have taken place over the past 100 - 150 years in our local area - or indeed anywhere else in the UK that may interest you.

Step One: Google 'National Library of Scotland' and follow the link or type <http://maps.nls.uk/> into your web browser. You should then be looking at this screen.

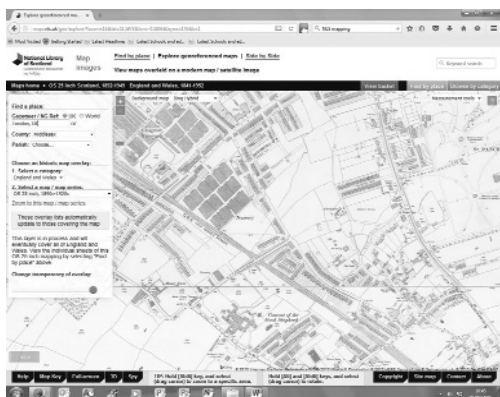


Step Two: Identify the box titled 'Georeferenced Maps'. Click on this and you will be taken to the page below.

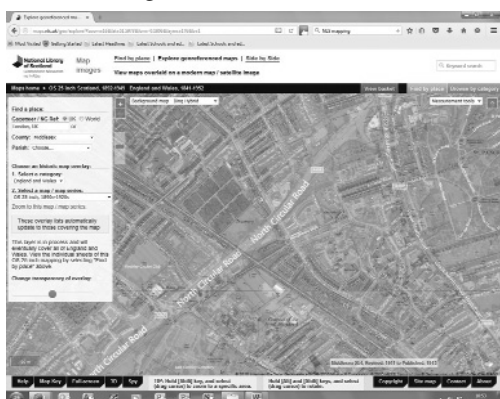


Step Three: In the light blue box to the top left of the screen type the place you are looking to find in the box that says 'Type a place-name'. In the example below I typed 'Finchley' and this took me to the Finchley area in North London. That is often enough but you can also select the county if you wish and if you know it use the Parish drop down box.

Step Four: You also need to 'choose an historic map overlay' from the light blue box above. In box 1 entitled 'Select a category'. I chose 'England and Wales' from the drop box by clicking the arrow on the right hand side. In box 2 entitled 'Select a map/map series' I chose 'OS 25 inch 1890's-1920's' [Note that the coverage for historic map layers may not yet be complete so some overlays may not yet be available at the moment.] The area that you have chosen and the historic map layer should now show up as in the top image overleaf.



Step Five: At the bottom of the box headed 'Find a place' is a blue button under the heading 'Change transparency of overlay'. Toggle this to the left and the historic map begins to be shown against a modern satellite photograph. You can use this to increase or decrease the transparency of the overlay/satellite map. See next image.



Step Six: Near the top of the map is a white horizontal box with the text 'Background map - Bing hybrid'. This is the Background map which shows above. Use the dropdown box to find other options for background maps and see which one works for you.

Other things to do: There are many other options to play around with. Use the + and - buttons near the top of the page to zoom in to areas you wish to examine in detail. The slider symbol under the + and - signs performs the same function.

You can also use the measurement tool box (towards the top right hand side of the screen) to measure the distance between two objects or to measure areas of buildings, fields or whatever takes your fancy.

There is plenty of scope and a lot of fun to be had with this amazing online resource. Currently I am using it to identify old demolished buildings in Finchley and finding out if they are on publicly accessible sites for future possible HADAS excavations. It is also incredibly useful to look at sites where planning applications are being proposed to see what, if anything, existed on the site beforehand.

<http://maps.nls.uk/>



www.hadas.org.uk

Mystery building - help wanted

During my research for the book I am currently writing about the Slaidburn Estate (formerly in Yorkshire, now Lancashire) and the King-Wilkinson family, in the family papers I came across a photograph of a house, an unusual one supported by pillars, but I have been unable to identify it. I suspect it is/was somewhere 'down south' ... Surrey, Sussex... perhaps? The photograph is shown right, and was probably taken about 1870.

Does anyone have any ideas? Can anyone identify it?

Many thanks if you can help. It is a real mystery to me.

Chris Spencer
www.chrisspencer.co.uk



*the mystery house
ref Lancashire Archives DDKW Box 73*

The Islands of Kent

Part 2

Paul A Carter

On the far north-east tip of Kent lies the Isle of Thanet. While it is no longer separated from the mainland, the island does still face the sea to the north, east and south-east. The Wantsum Channel originally flowed from the Thames Estuary to the English Channel, joining the Stour River just north of the ancient medieval port of Sandwich. The channel, approximately two miles wide, was a busy shipping route before gradual silting over in the late middle ages reduced the waterway to marshland and small river ways. A 1414 map shows a ferry crossing at Sarre, on the south-western corner of the island. St Nicholas-at-Wade, a village on the island's western edge, is so named as it was possible to 'wade' across to the mainland at this point.

There are various theories as to the source of the name Thanet. The Romans knew the island as *Athanaton* or *Thanaton*, the Saxons described it as *Teneth*, a variation of which, *Tenet*, was used in *Domesday Book* of 1086. It is possible that the name derives from the Celtic *teine*, meaning 'bright' or 'fire' island, implying a lighthouse or beacon, while the more sinister view is the name derives from *Thanatos*, the Greek word for death. Indeed, the island is home to more Bronze Age burial grounds than any other part of the country.

According to Bede, St. Augustine landed on Thanet in 597, before founding the Christian monastery in Canterbury, twelve miles to the south-west. A monastery at nearby Minster-in-Thamet, dating from 697, is still home to a religious order today.

To the eastern side of the island, Margate and Ramsgate sit just a couple of miles apart. The common term *gate* or *geat* means a gap in the cliffs. The name Margate is believed to stem from *mere* or pool of water while the earliest recorded name *Remmesgate* derives from the Anglo-Saxon term for ravens. Between the two towns lies the village of St. Peters. The geographic importance of the three settlements was reflected in their 15th century appoint-

ment as 'limbs' of the Cinque Ports. Just east of St. Peters is Broadstairs, a name derived from the Anglo-Saxon *Bradstow*, more obviously named after a flight of stairs leading up from the sea to an 11th century shrine of St Mary on the cliff-top.

The coastal towns may have a rich maritime heritage but they rose to wider prominence with thanks to the boom in seaside holidays during 19th century. The arrival of the railway in 1846 helped to transport holidaymakers more easily from London, keen to enjoy the sandy beaches and bathing facilities.



Isle of Thanet from John Spede's map of Kent c 1611

Ramsgate proudly hosts the only Royal Harbour in the country, an honour bestowed by King George VI.

Birchington is the main population centre at the western end of the island. Evidence of Iron Age settlement has been found in the area, as have Roman artefacts. The village's parish church, All Saints', dates from the mid-14th century. Nearby the Quex Park estate, dating from the early 15th century, is still in existence.

On the northern coast, spanning two bays, is Westgate-on-Sea, a unique Victorian development which until the 1860s consisted of a farm, a coastguard station and some cottages. That all changed with the plans to create an exclu-

sive gated seaside resort for the upper classes to escape from summertime in London. Some significant properties were built but, of note, the resort boasted the first bungalow built in the country (1869), sadly since demolished.

During both world wars, Thanet was an important aviation base. In 1914 a seaplane base was opened at Westgate to defend the Thames estuary from attack. The airport at Manston was built two years later and served with distinction as a frontline base during the 1939-45 conflict. The island was attacked heavily during the Battle of Britain and as a civil defence measure a network of tunnels were cut under Ramsgate, providing shelter for 60,000 people. Part of the excavations are now open to the public. From the 1960s, while still used by the RAF, civilian flights became more frequent, until the airport's closure in 2014. It is subject to ongoing debate whether it will reopen as a cargo hub or be developed for housing.

Other notable sites on the island include the remains of Richborough Castle, a Roman fort established in AD43. At the eastern tip of the island is North Foreland Lighthouse, dating from 1691, its clifftop location overlooking the treacherous Goodwin Sands.

Charles Dickens kept a holiday home in Broadstairs, where he wrote *David Copperfield*. For a while he owned Fort House, now named Bleak House after the novel he is believed to have written there. Augustus Pugin, the architect best known for his work designing the interior of the Palace of Westminster, built The Grange, his family home in Ramsgate, which has been restored by the Landmark Trust.

Local historians are well represented in Thanet. Organisations on the island include Margate Civic Society www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk, The Broadstairs Society www.the-broadstairsociety.org.uk and the Isle Of Thanet Geographical Association.



13th century parish church of St Nicholas at
St Nicholas-at-Wade

The promise and perils of searching information online

Brian Thomson

Anyone who has researched family (or local) history recently knows the benefit of doing so online. The use of modern computing power to search digitised databases saves a huge amount of effort and yields unlooked for information. There are free online services like 'freebmd' as well as the big commercial outfits such as 'ancestry' and 'findmypast' (which are accessible free through local libraries). But there is another side to this which I encountered recently when considering adding new information to my book, *Croxley Green in the First World War* (published by Rickmansworth Historical Society in 2014). One should not accept everything at face value.

When I started out researching the First World War, I thought, naively, that it would be straightforward to establish the names of men from Croxley Green who had died during the conflict. After all, there is a memorial on the Green listing the names. But I soon discovered that there were a number of physical memorials, each of which has a slightly different list. These include the Rickmansworth town memorial, the Dickinson memorial and the memorial in All Saints' church. I tried to reconcile those in my book (pp 152-3). Broadly, I felt it was right to go with the 57 names identified by the people who erected the memorial stone on the Green, even though I could not identify Croxley links for two of them.

I have had to take a hard fresh look at this, however. The stimulus was a project 'Herts at War', which is based in north Herts and whose aim is to ensure there is a record of everyone from Hertfordshire who lost their lives in the First World War, see their website at www.hertsatwar.co.uk. We made contact and they produced a list of 47 additional men whom they felt had Croxley connections. Their approach was to scour all the online records of those who died in the conflict. These include two databases of war memorials in the UK: Roll of Honour (www.roll-of-

honour.com) and the War Memorials Register (www.iwm.org.uk/corporate/projects-and-partnerships/war-memorials-register). The former website is run by a voluntary organisation with limited resources. Unfortunately, they misread the Croxley Green memorial and have included a number of Second World War casualties in their First World War list. Moreover, the War Memorials Register, which is maintained by the Imperial War Museum, has repeated the mistake.

In addition, 'Herts at War' has made use of two major databases containing records of First World War deaths. These are 'Soldiers Died in the Great War' and the 'Commonwealth War Graves Commission'. The former is available through 'findmypast' and 'ancestry' and the latter has its own excellent website, www.cwgc.org. Both databases can be searched by location e.g. by entering 'Croxley Green' in the search engine. 'Soldiers Died in the Great War' was published by HMSO in 1921, based on regimental records. It includes information on soldiers' places of birth. Consequently, searching this database yields names not on the local war memorial whose military records include their place of birth as Croxley Green. Most of those men moved away from the area during childhood and their local connection is slight.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission was founded in 1917 and its listing is based on cemetery and memorial records. First World War deaths were included for the period from 4 August 1914 to 31 August 1921. The parents and spouses of the dead were invited to add inscriptions on gravestones and brief details on the casualty records. Only some relatives did so but searching the database yields names not on the local war memorial whose relatives gave their address as Croxley Green. In most of those cases, the relatives moved into the area after the war and the soldiers concerned had no connection with Croxley Green. A useful brief description of the information on First World War deaths is available at www.1914-1918.net/soldiers/deathsburials.html

There is no substitute for looking carefully at the information from as many points of view as possible. The outcome of my work is that only eight of the proposed additional names have sufficiently strong local connections to feature in my research. However, 'Herts at War' will include many of the additional names against Croxley Green on their website to ensure that no one is overlooked. It seems to me that both approaches are valid, provided the rationale is clearly explained.

Of course, none of the databases of records is complete. There is a national project, 'In From The Cold', (www.infromthecold.org) devoted to unearthing the names of those who died who are not commemorated by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. So far they have found over five thousand cases. I have discovered one on the Croxley memorial. He was discharged from the army as medically unfit because of mental illness in 1918. His death was recorded in St Albans in December 1922, too late for the official records of the war.

This article first appeared in Rickmansworth Historical Review February 2017.

Shelswell History Festival

7-9 July 2017

Shelswell comprises a group of villages north of Bicester, Oxfordshire, an area immortalised in Flora Thompson's intimate description of village life in the late Victorian era in *Lark Rise to Candleford*. There are ten villages in the benefice of Shelswell, and Shelswell Park will provide the venue for the majority of events in the History Festival by kind permission of the Baroness von Maltzahn.

The Shelswell History Festival has been set up as a charity to increase awareness in local history and where it fits into the wider world, and will be staging its first festival between 7th and 9th July 2017. Flora Thompson referred to Shelswell Park in her trilogy of books *Lark Rise to Candleford* as Skeldon Park. She wrote in graphic terms about the celebrations for Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee in 1887, which she attended with her family as a young girl of ten.

Sponsors are being sought for events such as a Saxon display by the Wychwood Warriors, a Civil War re-enactment and sessions with the Bicester Archers. There are plans to invite local primary schools to bring groups to the Festival, with special activities planned for them. There will be a talk about Flora Thompson, followed by a Q&A session with a panel of experts on her life and work. The Festival will close with a pageant including a performance of the *Lark Rise to Candleford* play and a Barn Dance.

Martin Greenwood

SOCIETIES



As the summer approaches, societies are planning to go out on walks rather than sit in halls.

Avon Local History & Archaeology has two walks arranged so far. On Monday 8 May there will be a walk round old Brislington, (described as 'once one of Somerset's prettiest villages'), starting at St Luke's Church at 7 pm. Victorian Clifton will be the subject for the second walk on 12 June. www.alha.org.uk

The Oxtan Society is offering two walks on various dates in the year, an East Walk, and a West Walk, (so you need to do both to see the whole village, *below*). Oxtan Society Guides provide information, especially on the less obvious parts of the area. Go East on 22 April 20 May, 17 June, 15 July, 12 August and 9 September, or West on 6 May, 3 June, 1 and 29 July, 2 and 23 September. www.oxtansociety.org.uk



The Black Country Society will be taking 'A Walk around Carribee Island' on 17 May, exploring Galton Valley and Smethwick Summit on 31 May, their annual Industrial Archaeology Walkabout goes to Ryders Green and Swan Village on 7 June, and on 21 June they will be walking 'Around Churchill'. www.blackcountryrsociety.co.uk

The Sandwich Local History Society will be hosting the Kent History Federation Conference on Saturday, 20 May 2017. Richard Brook (author of *William Marshal, The Knight who saved England*) will be the guest speaker. The Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE DL will open the conference. Details of the programme and a booking form are at <http://kent-historyfederation.org/>. The subject is 'The Battle of Sandwich in 1217 - defeat for the Frenchman crowned King of England and the restoration of the Magna Carta'. In the Battle of Sandwich, St Bartholomew's Day 1217, the portsmen of the Cinque Ports defeated a French fleet coming to the aid of the Dauphin Lious who had been crowned King of England by barons opposed to King John. Defeated, Louis returned to France. As a consequence, the infant King Henry III under the influence of William Marshal reissued the Magna Carta and approved the first Charter of the Forest, original copies of which will be on show at the conference. Guided tours of the Chapel of St Bartholomew's Hospital, built thanks to the spoils of the battle, and of Sandwich - 'the completest medieval town' in England - will also be available as part of the programme. The practice of commemorating the Battle of Sandwich has sadly died out. On 'the day of Bartholomew' (24 August) the commune should meet in the city of Sandwich and make a solemn procession to the aforesaid hospital with tapers in their hands' - not to honour the Saint, but to give thanks to him for victory in the Battle of Sandwich on the Saint's Day in 1217, eight hundred years ago. The last 'solemn procession' was in the 1980's. To find out exactly what was being commemorated there is a longer article about the Battle of Sandwich on the society's website: www.sandwichlocalhistorysociety.org.uk/battle_of_sandwich.htm



The thirteenth century chapel of the Hospital of St. Bartholomew, which was founded in 1190. The photo shows the south side of the chapel
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North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society will be holding an Industrial Heritage Day on 6 May at Cromford Mill. The conference will explore some of the lesser known aspects of this famous World Heritage Site (which was once the home of BALH, see picture *LHN* 122 p 34). http://medias.co.uk/?page_id=300

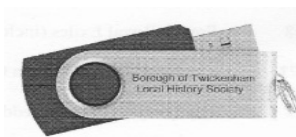
The Tang Hall History Group are researching National Service Days. Are you a native of York? Were you conscripted to National Service? If so they would love to hear from you. Please contact the group at the address below for a questionnaire. *Jane Burrows, 17 Oakland Avenue, Stockton Lane, Heworth, York, YO31 1BY. Tel: 01904 345942. Email: tanghall-history@gmail.com*

Keyworth & District Local History Society's website is growing, archive and modern photographs and the Occasional Papers series are being added. www.keyworthhistory.org.uk



Bartons bus in snow, The Square, 1947

Suffolk Local History Council Newsletter for Spring 2017 has a report on 'The Thursday Group' that meets at Ipswich Record Office on a Thursday morning to be useful. This particular occasion they were 'doing ephemera' (which, as some readers will know, is one of the editor's favourite things). The Record Office's definition was 'anything printed and normally having a short life' so they expected election pamphlets, but were surprised to see printed paper bags from shops. Prices on old restaurant menus proved fascinating. They quickly discovered a common problem of dating such material. At the time, of course, a day and a month is sufficient to identify an event, but that doesn't help us many years later. And this is being done today – so if you are responsible for publishing an election leaflet, or a poster for a concert or a programme for a village fete – please add the year to the date. Local historians of the future will be grateful! www.slhc.org.uk

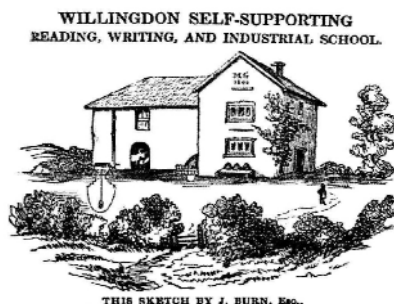


Borough of Twickenham Local History Society received the BALH Award for a Society

Newsletter in 2016. The Society submitted two publications to the **London & Middlesex Archaeological Society** and Chris French's paper on the Udney Park Estate 1870-1939 won the award, with a highly commended for Paul Barnfield's paper on the Local Tribunal at Hampton Wick in WW1. In a modern development of issuing a CDRom, for making digital archives and index available to members, the Society has produced a USB stick. This contains all their *Newsletters* since 1963, supplementary articles, the Newsletter Index, and a guide to searching. www.botlhs.co.uk

A recent addition to the archives of the **Fleet & Crookham Local History Group** are two letters written in 1917. They were sent to the donor's great grandmother by L C Whustone Stirling, the wife of a captain, for whom she had worked as a maid. They reveal friendliness and sympathy, while preserving the social differences in their relationship. www.fclhg.org.uk

'Willingdon's Self-Supporting Reading, Writing and Agricultural School' is the subject of an article in the *Eastbourne Local Historian*, Spring 2017 from **Eastbourne Local History Society**. The idea of Mary Ann Gilbert, of Trelassick in Cornwall and Eastbourne, was to teach the rudiments of education to the rural poor, appointing a master who would otherwise have been in the workhouse. He would receive no salary but his living would be provided by payment from scholars for lessons and the sale of produce from their labour. In July 1839 she bought a 14-acre plot in Willingdon and the school was established. www.eastbournehistory.org.uk



Warwickshire Local History Society *Bulletin* draws readers' attention to two 2016 publications *The Story of the Shakespeare Club of Stratford-upon-Avon 1824-2016* by Susan Brock and Sylvia Morris. The Club was responsible for organising the first local festivities for Shakespeare's birthday in 1827 and played an important part in setting up the Birthplace Trust, but the book also deals with the role of tradesmen in the town in promoting Shakespeare, and the social and political tensions in the town in the 19th and early 20th centuries. www.stratfordshakespeareclub.com. *Birmingham Wills and Inventories 1512-1603* from The Dugdale Society edited by Jacqueline Geater, contains the text of 156 fascinating wills and inventories. The documents throw light on material culture, household arrangements and family relationships of the time. www.dugdale-society.org.uk. They also recommend the newly relaunched website Our Warwickshire. www.outwarwickshire.org.uk. www.warwickshirehistory.org.uk

The cast iron name plates that are a feature of many local streets are disappearing and being replaced by 'low maintenance' plastic ones. This has been noticed by the **Wavertree Society** who have taken action. A dedicated member, on behalf of the society, has obtained a grant from the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (marking 50 years of Conservation Areas this year). This is will help repair and repaint surviving signs. www.wavertreesociety.org

The *Bulletin* from **Cumbria Local History Federation** provides information, ideas and encouragement to their members - societies and individuals through the area. There is a regular events calendar of society meetings, reports of events and publications, profiles of groups, suggestions for fund raising and more, all contributing to the ways in which they meet the objectives set out in their Constitution. The cover picture of the Spring 2017 issue shows a Cumbria Cyclecar (see below) made in Cockermouth, the subject of an article from Cockermouth heritage Group. www.clhf.org.uk



The **Migration Museum at the Workshop** opened on 26 April. It tells of movements to and from Britain over the centuries, and explores how migration has influenced British history. There will be an adventurous and stimulating programme of exhibitions, events and education workshops during 2017-18 in this arts and community space just off the Albert Embankment in London. The intention is for the museum to move into a permanent home in the near future. The two opening exhibitions are 'Call Me By My Name: Stories from Calais and Beyond', and '100 Images of Migration'. There is a Resource Bank for schools, including a downloadable fiction books list. Under development is The Migration Museums Network, 'to increase and improve outputs associated with migration and related themes in museums and galleries across the UK'. www.migrationmuseum.org

The **National Emergency Services Museum** in Sheffield has a new permanent exhibition about the Blitz in Sheffield including 'lights, sound, smoke, smells, projections, social recordings and vehicles ...' and a wealth of images from the collections at Sheffield Libraries and 'Picture Sheffield'. <http://www.emergencymuseum.org.uk/>

Urchins, Sprogs and Guttersnipes is the new exhibition, located across all three of **Ripon Museums**, reveals the tales of not so lucky Victorian children. Visit the Workhouse to read stories of pauper apprentices who were hit with sticks and threatened with a 'black hole' and the heart-breaking tale of a truly wicked step-mother. On view are some of the original Workhouse records and a display of Victorian toys. Read about Ripon's female Artful Dodgers at the Prison & Police Museum, the teenage girl pickpockets who were sentenced to hard labour in 1853. Discover more about Victorian punishments and experience sensory deprivation in our newly created 'Dark Cell'. www.riponmuseums.co.uk

Hay Castle, recently home to a bookshop and site of the Hay Literary festival, is to be restored thanks to funding from HLF and the Andrew Lloyd Webber Foundation. It will become a major centre for culture, arts, and education, and public access will be available to the whole site for the first time in 800 years. www.haycastletrust.org www.aim-museums.co.uk

Last Autumn **Nottingham Castle Museum & Art Gallery** and Nottingham City Council received a grant from HLF of £13.9 m towards the Nottingham Castle Transformation Project. This five-year programme will include a new Robin Hood Gallery, a new Rebellion Gallery, and much more. It is described as 'the most significant heritage regeneration project in the UK today'. Meanwhile the 'Viewfinder' project aims to map former uses of the castle, to archive and preserve images from the public and to allow local people to share their memories from the site in past times. There are already fascinating pictures on the website. <http://www.nottinghamcastle.org.uk/transformation/viewfinder-nottingham-castles-history-in-pictures>



The Green, Nottingham Castle

Yorkshire Sculpture Park runs a programme of heritage events, forthcoming are a Twilight Lake Walk on 19 May (part of 'Museums at Night') and on 24 June 'The Creation of the Lakes', a summer heritage walk exploring viewpoints around the lake and discovering the stories that surround them, including Sir Thomas Wentworth's ship *The Aurora*. Details and booking online yssp.co.uk/heritage

The Hunterian Museum will close on 20 May to reopen in the summer of 2020 as part of the redevelopment of the London home of the Royal College of Surgeons in Lincoln's Inn Fields. During this time they plan to work with other organisation to provide managed access to the collections for research, and will run outreach events and continue the 'surgery for schools' sessions. www.rcseng.ac.uk/transform



This year sees the 200th anniversary of the birth of the landscape architect and author Edward Kemp (1817-1891), who was superintendent of Birkenhead Park, and a designer of parks and cemeteries, including Grosvenor Park in Chester, Congleton Park in Congleton, and Flaybrick Hill Cemetery in Birkenhead (where he is buried). There is a downloadable guide to the records of the municipal cemeteries, including Flaybrick Cemetery, held at **Wirral Archives**. It has a very long website address but if you put 'wirral cemetery records' into your search engine it should be the first pdf that appears.

<https://www.wirral.gov.uk/sites/default/files/all/Libraries%20and%20archives/service%20user%20guides/Cemetery%20Records.pdf>

Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service have established a way of collecting copies of eulogies to preserve the detailed information about people's lives they often contain. The offer is to give a permanent home to those tributes written in memory of people who had a significant connection with the county. There is a specific submission form, and conditions apply – such as agreeing that the eulogy will be made available to members of the public, such as school children undertaking local history projects or bereaved people wanting ideas on how to write a eulogy for their special person. <http://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/ArchiveEulogies/ArchiveEulogies.aspx>

'400 Voices of Leicester' celebrated the publication over 400 interviews recorded by the **Leicester Oral History Archive** between 1983 and 1990. The recordings contain memories of Leicester and Leicestershire from the 1890s to the post-war period, covering subjects such as childhood, health, transport, housing, politics, women's lives and the World Wars I and II. The original interviews now form part of the East Midlands oral History Archive.

Digitisation has made this resource the largest online collection of local oral history recordings in the UK.

<http://specialcollections.le.ac.uk/cdm/landing-page/collection/p15407coll1>

West Sussex Archives Society will be holding an all-day conference on Saturday 23 September 2017 at Pagham Village Hall on the theme of Maritime Sussex. Further details <http://westsussexarchivessociety.webplus.net/page3.html>

As part of the Living Links Community Archive Project, 95 Archive Ambassadors have been trained to act as links between **Record Offices in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight**, and their local communities. They act as 'champions of local history', pass on their skills, and help the Record Office keep in touch with local communities. Training sessions are held once or twice a year to meet demand. <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/archives/community-archives/archives-ambassador.htm>

Staffordshire History Day 2017 will take place on 6 May. Presented by **Staffordshire Archives and Heritage** in conjunction with **Keele University** and the **Centre for West Midlands History at the University of Birmingham**, the title is 'New developments in Staffordshire History' and the programme covers a very wide range of subjects. Full details can be found at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/leisure/archives/Events/home.aspx

A recent school visit to *Lancashire Archives* raised many questions with the children about how books were made in earlier times, and how to value something like the magnificent 15th century book of hours (RCFo/11). They were impressed by the vast number of volumes in the strongroom, and had a chance to try illumination, which inspired the beautifully decorated 'thank you' card received by the office. <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/media/901211/news-from-the-archives-edition-181-apr-2017.pdf>

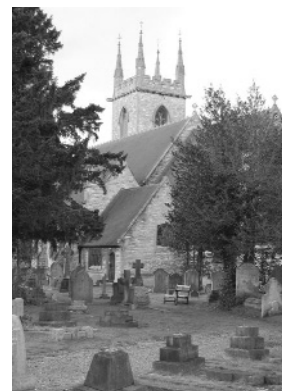
The Spring Newsletter on 'Surrey in the Great War' from **Surrey History Centre** contains an article on a most unusual aspect of the war, the production of waterproof letter-cases for soldiers which 'make excellent little presents to send to our soldiers at the front'. It was largely traced through a series of letters to the editor of *The Times*. www.surreyinthegreatwar.org.uk/story/pineroyd-letter-case-industry

The online collection of images of Sheffield from **Sheffield City Council's Archives and Local Studies Library** has now reached a total of 75,000. They date from the 17th century to 2017. Over 300 new images are being uploaded every month. <http://www.picturesheffield.com/>

Chester History & Heritage Spring Newsletter is an 'Entertainment Special'. The front page article looks at the Royalty Theatre, opened in 1882, described as 'a perfect bijou theatre ... capable of housing 2,000 persons'. Other articles explore the grand opening of the Odeon Cinema in 1936, and present a trawl through the '*Chronicle*' to see what was entertaining Cestrians 50 years ago. www.westcheshiremuseums.co.uk



Inscriptions, photographs and a map of the 320 graves from the Victorian section of the churchyard surrounding St. Mary's Church, Ewell are now on the website at <http://www.epsomandewellhistoryexplorer.org.uk/StMaryEwellGraveyard2.html>. This completes a project begun some forty years ago by Mabel Dexter and a team of volunteers from the Nonsuch Antiquarian Society (now the Epsom & Ewell History & Archaeology Society). They divided the graveyard into north, south, east and west for recording purposes, and this arrangement has been kept in the numbering on the plan on the website. In the summer of 2013 a photographic record of the churchyard was made, to show the shape and style of all monuments before any further deterioration took place. The original records made forty years earlier were checked and collated against the monuments by Louise Aitken, and the resulting transcript is, we hope, as accurate a record as possible. 'Lives & Times' from Epsom & Ewell Local & family History Centre. www.EpsomandEwellHistoryExplorer.org.uk



St Mary's Church, Ewell
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Newly Accredited Archive Services

The National Archives has announced ten newly Accredited Archive Services:

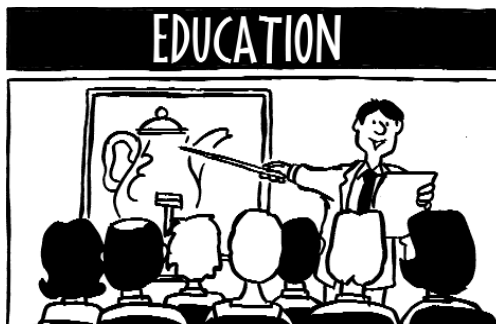
Archifau Ynys Môn/Anglesey Archives, Berkshire Record Office, London Borough of Croydon Archives, History of Advertising Trust, Hull History Centre, Plymouth and West Devon Record Office, Royal College of Nursing Library and Archive Service, Devon Archives and Local Studies Service, Somerset Archives and Local Studies Service, and Wiltshire and Swindon Archives.

Another significant milestone has been reached with the successful retention of Accredited status by the first seven services to be asked to submit for review:

Cumbria Archives, Media Archive of Central England, Network Rail Corporate Archive, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Tyne and Wear Archives, Exeter Cathedral Library and Archives, UCL Institute of Education Archives

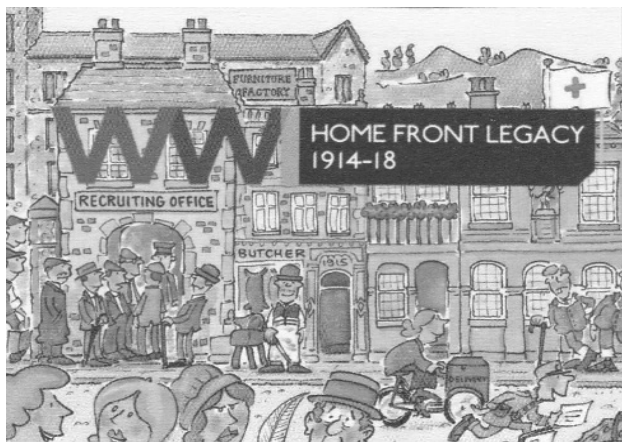
'This brings the number of Accredited Archive Services to 72, and we look forward to seeing many more in the coming months. Our congratulations to all, and thanks to assessors, peer reviewers and the Accreditation Committee.'

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/archive-service-accreditation/>



The Council for British Archaeology has launched its 'new action-packed resources for schools, youth groups and families, designed to inspire the next generation of archaeologists'. There are Illustrated Home Front Panoramas, clue cards, historic photo cards, character cards and story cards, a suite of seven session plans, and training videos. The Home Front Legacy 1914-1918 project exists to research, discover and record the remains of the Home Front across the UK, to uncover moving and inspiring local stories, and to enable everyone to get involved. www.homefrontlegacy.org.uk

www.yac-uk.org/home-front-legacy-1914-18



'Life on Dead Street' is an exhibition at The British Schools Museum, Hitchin, until 2 July, that allows visitors to discover what it was like to live in the poorest part of Hitchin in the 1800s, and to learn how the British School provided a vital opportunity for pupils to escape a lifetime of poverty. www.british-schoolsmuseum.org.uk

During 2017 the **War Memorials Trust** is working to promote the Learning Programme to Schools, youth groups and young people across the UK. They are developing new learning resources, including some for specific regional providing local information. In particular they wish to ensure schools are well-prepared for the end of the World War 1 centenary in 2018. Since 2014 the WMT learning Officer has made 58 visits to schools, and worked with approximately 4,600 young people. School visits vary considerably and are tailored to individual requirements as far as possible; they receive consistently good feedback. Go to www.learnaboutwarmemorials.org to find all the resources that can be downloaded and used today, or contact the Learning Officer at learning@warmemorials.org

Canterbury Christ Church University is running a number of Day Schools in Summer 2017 of interest to local historians. For example, on 13 May 'The Merchant's Tale? Life in London and Kent in the Middle Ages', 20 May 'Local History Research for Beginners', 17 June 'Advanced Skills in Local History Research', 24 June 'Bleak House? Rich and Poor in Victorian England', and 1 July 'The Last Place God Made: Lives and landscape in the north Kent marshland'. Dr Gill Draper, BALH's Events and Development Officer, is the tutor for the first, fourth and fifth of these, and Nicola Waddington for the second and third. For further details of these and more <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/cae/day-schools/summer.aspx>

Victorian schooldays feature in a new exhibition running at the **University of Leicester** until 7 July 2017 (see right). It explores the lives of Victorian school children – including the games that they played and their classroom. The exhibition, organised by the University's Special Collections, showcases material such as the Higson Collection of children's literature and the John Hersee Collection of school exercise books, from the Mathematical Association Library and held at the University of Leicester. <http://www2.le.ac.uk/library/find/specialcollections/exhibitions>

The 40th **Keele Latin and Palaeography Summer School** will take place 22 – 27 July 2017. Expert tuition is provided in small groups for those who need to read medieval and early modern documents for local and national history. Courses range from introductions to medieval Latin and palaeography, to more advanced ones on specialist topics. The School is attended by local historians, post-graduate students, and archivists from UK and abroad. It is held in Keele University's campus in North Staffordshire. For further information see www.keele.ac.uk/history/adults/latinand-palaeographysummerschool

There is a **London International Palaeography Summer School** from 12 – 16 June 2017, organised by the Institute of English Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London. The programme of courses contains a very wide range of options. Further details can be found at www.ies.sas.ac.uk/london-palaeography-summer-school

The **London Rare Books School** offers a series of five-day intensive courses on a wide variety of book-related topics. They will take place 26 – 30 June, 3 – 7 July and 10 – 14 July 2017, based at Senate House Library, University of London. For further details see www.ies.sas.ac.uk/lrbs

The Spring 2017 issue of *Open History*, the journal of the **Open University History Society**, contains (amongst much else of interest) an article answering the question 'Can school records provide an insight into the effects of the English Civil Wars on the population of England?' and a detailed review of the FutureLearn Course 'Irish Lives in war and revolution: exploring Ireland's history 1912-1925'. This is one of the many short, free, online courses available through the FutureLearn programme. www.ouhistory.org.uk www.futurelearn.com



L Valentine. Aunt Louisa's London Toy Books

Local History News and the First World War

In *Local History News* we have been publishing a series of themed articles relating to the First World War, as you will have noticed. These examine key topics and questions; and consider sources and methods. The articles, each written by an expert in the field, are aimed at both the general reader and those interested in research. They are all available on the special section of the BALH website dedicated to World War I, which can be found at <http://www.balh.org.uk/education/local-history-and-the-first-world-war/resources-from-balh>, (as well as on the usual *LHN* pages there).

We hope these articles have encouraged readers, both individuals and societies, to follow up some of the topics and undertake some local research as a result. If you have done so, please let us know. We would be delighted to hear what you have been doing, which topics were particularly interesting, what sources you discovered locally, how you organised the project, how are you planning to share the results, and so on. Do get in touch.

email editor.lhn@balh.org.uk

BALH at Who Do You Think You Are? Live 2017

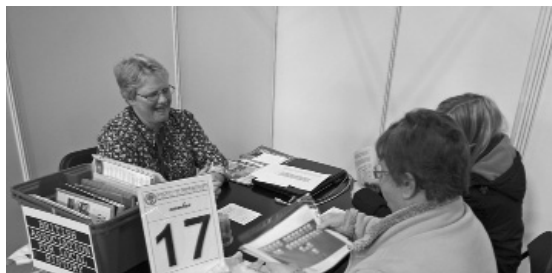


Above - Gill on set-up day

Below - the queue waiting to get in on the opening morning

Above right - Gill doing an 'Ask the Expert' session

Below right - Jane's talk in the Education Zone



Talks from BALH people were given by Gill Draper, Ruth Paley, Paul Carter, Paul A Carter and Jane Howells; and Ruth Paley and Gill Draper did 'Ask the Expert' sessions.



photos from Stephen Draper and Paul A Carter

Book reviews

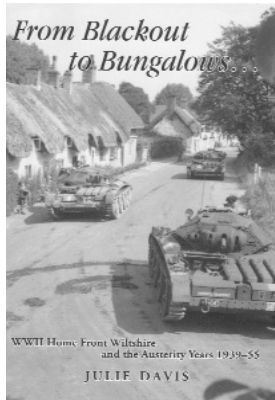
From Blackouts to Bungalows: WW11 Home Front Wiltshire and the Austerity Years, 1939-55

Julie Davis

The Hobnob Press 2016 £17.95
ISBN 978 1 906978 38 9

As we pass the halfway mark in the commemorations of the First World War it is both timely and frankly somewhat refreshing to welcome a book that deals with the other major conflict of the 20th century, WW11. This is no light-weight diversion but a substantial piece of comprehensive and authoritative research that sets the local experience of Wiltshire in the wider national context. In a text of 522 pages of text and 130 pages of footnotes and indexes the subjects covered include evacuation for which rural Wiltshire was a prime target; the presence of allied troops; work in industry and agriculture; the Home Guard; prisoners of war; rationing and morale; and finally the post war period. The decision to analyse the ten years after the end of the war is to be applauded as it does not treat the war in isolation but examines its long term effects. The author is constantly seeking to give a wide context and meaning to local experience, and this considerably enhances the scholarly credentials of the work.

A large amount of original and published sources in Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, ranging from local authority archives, to personal diaries and letters, together with published testimonies, have been scoured to provide fascinating details that enliven the text. Of the several published sources the diaries of Chippenham GP Joan Hickson, and account of Fay Inchfawn of Freshford, just over the border in Somerset, are particularly eloquent and informative. Of community histories used *Memories of Bemerton in Wartime*, of



one of the suburbs of Salisbury, was an impressive resource. However, this is no cobbling together of various titbits of information. They are all interwoven into an extremely well crafted and readable text. Julie Davis has marshalled the mass of detail to produce an absorbing account of the impact of the war on the county that does not disappoint in any way.

The book is well illustrated, although some of the images are slightly blurred.

There are several reasons why I have no doubt that this book will become a standard work, both within Wiltshire and beyond. Principally as it presents Wiltshire as a case study that will be invaluable to students and researchers of the period in other parts of the country.

Steven Hobbs

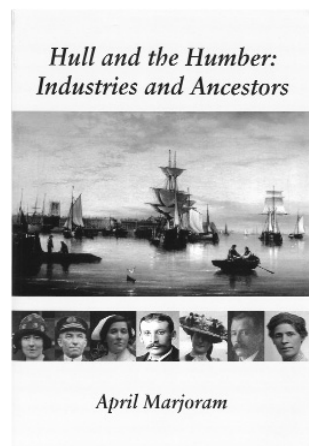
Hull and the Humber: Industries and Ancestors

April Marjoram

2015 (no ISBN) £12 from the author email: aprilmarjoram@btinternet.com

Hull has often had a bad press. Even one of its former residents, the habitually morose Philip Larkin described it as 'East Riding's dirty rump' – although he also took inspiration from the city. The twentieth century was not kind to Hull, which suffered devastating bombing raids in World War II, followed by economic recession and the decline of local industries.

However, Hull is now looking towards a brighter future as the UK's City of Culture for 2017, having won the accolade thanks to a campaign theme of 'a city coming out of the shadows'.



This year will see the city reflect on its past, present, and future through specially curated events and installations, some of which have already highlighted what is manufactured in Hull today.

The city's industrial past is a theme explored with great fondness by April Marjoram in *Hull and the Humber: Industries and Ancestors*. Richly illustrated and meticulously referenced in order to aid fellow researchers, this book touches upon the many and varied commercial activities that were operating at the height of Hull's prosperity in the nineteenth century. Several of these industries were directly connected with Hull's long-held significance as a major port, while others emerged through the processing of imported raw materials, such as sugar refining and leather working.

However, the true focus of this book is people, with insights into Hull's industries being revealed through the experiences of individuals who lived and worked there. The story begins with the pilots – the men whose job it was to guide vessels safely through the Humber Estuary – before introducing the reader to shipping agents and manufacturers, some of whom were closely involved with civic life.

Each chapter traces changing family fortunes, making extensive use of trade directories, parish registers, census records and newspapers, in addition to several archive collections. Many of the people encountered along the way are ancestors of the author, with the result that a large part of the book concerns the Foster and Rea families. Yet instead of limiting this book's scope, the focus on these particular families helps to encapsulate the opportunities that Hull afforded. The history of the Rea family demonstrates that the sea once connected the city to far flung parts of the world. Some of the Reas left Hull to settle as far afield as Hawaii and Samoa. They also had connections with Germany thanks to Hull's strong mercantile ties there stretching back many centuries.

Following the Foster and Rea families also widens the geographic scope of this book within a regional context through the connections between Hull and places on the south bank of the river in Lincolnshire, specifically Barton upon Humber and Grimsby. With its focus on family history, this book offers a different approach to exploring Hull in its heyday and will be of particular interest to anyone who had ancestors connected with the port and its associated industries.

Sarah Rose

Guided Visit

Houses of Parliament and Parliamentary Archives

Tuesday 8 August 2017

The morning conducted tour, during the summer recess when Parliament will not be sitting, will include the Commons and Lords Chambers, the Queen's Robing Room, the Royal Gallery and Westminster Hall.

In the afternoon there will be a talk and conducted tour of the Parliamentary Archives located in the Victoria Tower. Members will be shown some of the surviving records which are stored at the top of the Tower together with the research facilities available.

No children under the age of 16 years are allowed. There is a maximum of 16 visitors for this event. Attendees must carry photographic ID (e.g. passport, driving licence).

The visit will begin with assembling at 10.50 am promptly, for a tour lasting approximately 75 minutes. The lunchbreak will be from 12.45 to 2.20. The afternoon visit to the Archives will include a presentation in the Lecture Room, a display of documents and an introduction to the Search Room. It will conclude at approximately 4 pm.

VISITOR INFORMATION FOR HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT AND THE PARLIAMENTARY ARCHIVES

There are a range of limitations to the visit for reasons of safety and security and these can be seen on the Events booking website. The most important requirement is to be physically capable of climbing spiral stairs, and evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Participants to the visit are responsible for making their own way to the venue. Tickets and a map will be included with the receipt for each booking. Everyone must comply with all Health, Safety and Security instructions given by Parliamentary/Archives and Security staff.

Cost £22.00 for BALH Members.
£24.00 for Non-Members.

Vandalism!

Alan Crosby

A few months ago I was working at the Archive Centre in Carlisle, and fell into conversation with some fellow researchers. Among them was Jane Platt, who has contributed a number of book reviews to *The Local Historian* over the past two years, and who in the July 2016 issue of the journal published an article about a long-running quarrel between High Church and Evangelical interests at Christ Church, a now-demolished Anglican place of worship in the city.

Another researcher mentioned the fact that the long run of copies of *The Local Historian* held at Carlisle Central Library's local studies section had been attacked. Specifically, Jane's article, published six months before, had been carefully removed from (or torn out of) the issue in question. Quite clearly, this was no mere vandalism. Imagining that I was a simple vandal (an unlikely proposition, I agree) I decided that I would have taken a marker pen and scribbled all over this and other articles. Or maybe ripped and mauled and ravaged the pages of all of them. Or possibly smeared ketchup or something worse over every volume while the librarians weren't looking (there being far fewer librarians these days, and all of them having their work cut out just to keep the place going, as in every other library across the land).

But this was clearly not random vandalism. Jane and her works had been targeted by someone with a specific interest in parochial quarrels over ritual in late nineteenth century Carlisle churches. That is surely what modern parlance refers to as 'a niche market'. We felt that passionately-crazed devotees of late Victorian ritualistic theologi-

cal argument are few and far between. And Carlisle is not a hotbed of religious ferment in the present age, no matter how heated opinion may have been 120 years ago.

So we considered the implications. Had a seriously deranged Anglo-Catholic High Church Ritualist, his clothing smelling strongly of incense and candle wax, and driven to madness by the sounds of clanging bells ringing in his ears, crept into the library, determined to eradicate that filthy article in the notoriously heretical journal, *The Local Historian*? Or conversely, had a solemn-faced, soberly-clad Low Church fanatic, loathing even passing refer-



ence to ritual, smells, bells, the Virgin Mary and all the saints, lurked in the local studies section until nobody was looking, and then with one swift action ripped the offending pages from the volume, the tearing sound hidden by a fit of coughing?

Or ... and here our thoughts speculated even more widely ... was there, living somewhere in the Border City, a pitifully impoverished local historian, his clothing (nibbled by mice and moth) flapping around his emaciated form, still burning with the inner fire of passionate enthusiasm for research but quite unable to afford the hefty annual subscription to BALH? Had he crept or shuffled into the library, gnawing on a crust of stale bread and motivated by a desperate quest to find the Holy Grail of 'Scrapping at Carlisle: the battle for Christ Church 1895-1929', which would provide succour in his lonely explorations of religious bickering in a small provincial city in the years around the First World War. And then, furtively under the table, had he silently torn those precious pages from their moorings, and car-

ried them away to his dreary garret lodgings in an unshareable triumph?

No matter who did it, however, we relished the strange compliment. That a specific article should be so targeted seemed to us (especially to me as the editor) a glorious vindication of the value and importance of *The Local Historian*. As a theft it cannot compare with the hold-up of the 6.50pm mail train from Glasgow to Euston at Cheddington on 8 August 1963, and of course I would never in any way condone such wanton vandalism, but I am fascinated by the implications. I checked ebay to see if a copy of Jane's article was being offered for sale ... but nothing appeared. The thief still gloats over his ill-gotten gains.

BALH Trustees' Report 2016

The Association is an unincorporated charity governed by an elected Council. 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. The elected members of Council are the trustees of the Charity. Trustees are listed elsewhere in this report with Officers of the Association and members of the advisory committees.

The year has seen the establishment of a successful working relationship with our partners, KSAM, who have provided excellent data and procedures related to finance and membership with reliable quarterly reports and membership data. This has enabled trustees to tighten up their financial control and management as well as gain a greater understanding of changing financial legislation. There has also been an opportunity for BALH to examine its organization and administrative structures through the establishment of a Structures Working Group which reported in September. The report provided ideas for enhancing the role of trustees, improving committee structures and clarifying contracts for services which are currently being taken forward following extensive consultation. Membership remains healthy at more than 2100 with renewal rates that are the envy of many other organizations. Over half the members are societies.

Much of the planning and organization was carried out by the advisory committees (Publishing, Events and Education) which met during Assembly days and the Management Committee which met four times a year. Council met twice in March and October. Conference business was largely dealt with by the Education Committee.

BALH has continued to provide a range of services with further development of its website and the preparation of resources. Selling back copies of publications has doubled revenue from this source and further resources are being developed including those for schools and an updated version of the popular internet directory. Besides its own successful Local History Day, BALH has also been actively involved in collaborative ventures such as a successful conference in Ipswich as well as involvement in the County Societies Symposium. It has provided speakers at key events such as the Who Do You Think You Are conference.

The Local Historian, the Association's flagship journal, again appeared four times in 2016. *Local History News* with a variety of short articles and news items also appeared quarterly. Feedback on these journals remains very positive. Other services much appreciated by members include the society insurance scheme.

BALH's priorities are identified and evaluated through its development plan which is regularly discussed and amended by Council. The current priorities comprise increasing membership and profile; further developing the website and social media; improving links with local history societies including more joint visits; greater focus on being represented at key national and regional events; improving BALH's advocacy role; expanding joint projects and collaboration (including with the USA) and improved administration.

The loss of David Hey last year was a huge blow to the Association but our new President, Caroline Barron, has been an active and positive presence attending several of our meetings including chairing an important seminar in December. It is sad to report the deaths of other who have served BALH with distinction over many years including Norman Alvey and Michael Farrar. Others have also resigned from committee work largely due to ill health or pressure of work. We are indebted to these people for their dedication and commitment but it is pleasing that we are able to recruit new committee members and trustees.

Local History Day was held on 4 June 2016 and attracted a good attendance to St Andrew in Holborn. The morning session focused on business archives with inputs from Alex Ritchie and Richard Wiltshire. This was followed by the Annual General Meeting of the Association. The keynote lecture was delivered by Professor Tom Williamson on the theme of Lancelot Brown and the Capability Men: the landscape revolution of 18th century England.

Presentations to winners under the Awards Scheme, both for publications and for personal achievement in the field of local history, were made by Professor Claire Cross, a vice president as part of Local History Day. Award winners were:

In recognition of personal achievement:

Mike Chitty, Liverpool
Frank Cowin, Isle of Man
Prue Stokes, Kent
Keith Wainwright, Wakefield

For research and publication:

Andrew Watkins, "Humphrey Riddle and the Swan at Coleshill: a sixteenth-century small town innkeeper and his inn", *Warwickshire History: Journal of the Warwickshire Local History Society*, 16, 2 (winner long articles and recipient of The David Hey Memorial Article Award 2016)

Rosemary S Hall, "The boarding out of pauper children in Warwickshire 1869-1900", *Warwickshire History: Journal of the Warwickshire Local History Society*, 16, 3

Anthony Squires, "Leighfield Forest: woodlands and landscape in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries", *Rutland Record: Journal of the Rutland Local History and Record Society*, 34

Janet Owen, "The churches in Hornsey and district during the First World War: at home", *Hornsey Historical Society Bulletin*, 56 and "The churches in Hornsey and district during the First World War: abroad", *Hornsey Historical Society Bulletin*, 56

Marian Morrison, "Colliery health care in the nineteenth-century North Durham Coalfield", *Durham Local History Society Journal*, 79 (winner, short articles)

Christine Verguson, "All Huddersfield: our town on the wireless in the 1920s", *Journal of the Huddersfield Local History Society*, 26

Martin Coppen, "The history of St Mary Magdalene Hospital (The Spittle)", *Lookback at Andover: Journal of the Andover History and Archaeology Society*, 3,6

Lina Rollitt, "The church rates controversy", *The Chronicle: Journal of the Berkhamsted Local History and Museum Society*, 12

A society newsletter:

Borough of Twickenham Local History Society

Overall the Trustees believe that the Association continues to run effectively and according to its constitution and the rules of its charitable status. They are grateful to all those on paid contracts and the many on committees, working groups and other volunteers for their support, knowledge and dedication.

BALH AGM 2017

The AGM of the British Association for Local History will be held during Local History Day on 3 June 2017. The Agenda, and the Minutes of the 2016 AGM, can be found in the supplement to this issue of *Local History News*.

The Trustees' Report given here forms part of the Association's Annual Report for 2016 which will be available in full at the meeting.

Notes News Issues

**Society members:
please see three important notes here on
insurance, website links and Local
History Day**

Local History Day 2017

We look forward to seeing many members and friends at our annual celebration that is Local History Day. The morning session will throw out challenges on a topic of wide interest. Our new President, Professor Caroline Barron will take the chair at the AGM for the first time. Presentation of BALH Awards gives public recognition to the achievements of local historians from around the country. Professor Christopher Dyer is this year's lecturer who will be exploring and illustrating 'Local societies on the move' in the middle ages. Don't be deterred by the address of the venue, it is not hard to find and detailed directions will be sent when you book your tickets. The booking form can be found in the supplement of this issue.

Note to societies: if you would like table and/or display space at LHD, to share your activities with others, please get in touch with Gill Draper as soon as possible: development@balh.org.uk

Societies and the BALH website

Our new local history society listings are now online and a number of our member societies are taking advantage of this facility to promote their website. The new pages can be viewed at <http://www.balh.org.uk/useful-links>.

If you would like to add an entry for your society, please contact Paul Carter at webmanager@balh.org.uk, with the following details:

Society name

A couple of sentences about the society

The society's website address

Your BALH membership number if you know it.

Anniversary

BALH came into being on 1 April 1982, so has just passed its 35th anniversary. According to *Local History News* Number 1 (right), the first individual member to sign up was John West. Many readers will have on

their shelves his invaluable books *Village Records* (1st edition 1962, 3rd 1997) and *Town Records* (1983). The first society to join was St Edmunds Local History Group in Salisbury. The purpose of *LHN* was set out as 3-fold: 'to spread news about BALH and its members, to note events, and to enable members to share the pleasures and the problems of running local history organisations, an archive repository, a museum, or of doing a piece of research work'. I hope we are still carrying out those initial objectives, despite many changes in the intervening years, not the least being the arrival of the internet.



Insurance for society members

The annual Insurance Fact Sheet is to be found in the centre of this issue of *Local History News*. Society members are strongly advised to detach and keep it for their records. Please read it carefully and note the information it contains. The Fact Sheet can also be found on our website at

www.balh.org.uk/membership/balh-insurance-for-local-societies.

Any queries relating to insurance should be addressed to the broker (see Fact Sheet for details).

PLEASE ALWAYS CHECK YOU HAVE UP TO DATE INFORMATION.

In addition to the website link above, you can ask for a copy of the current factsheet by **email to admin@balh.org.uk**.

BALH Officers and Committees

President: Professor Caroline Barron

Vice Presidents: Professor Norman McCord, Mr Phillip Snell, Dr Kate Thompson,
Dr Christopher Charlton, Dr David Dymond, Professor Claire Cross

Council 2016-17:

Prof Claire Cross*
Ms Jacquelené Fillmore* (Vice-chair)
Mr David Griffiths
Mr R Hunter
Dr Tim Lomas*(Chair)
Dr Jo Mattingly
Dr Margaret O'Sullivan*
Dr Ruth Paley*
Dr Winifred Stokes
Dr Nigel Tringham*
Ms Isobel Watson

**members of Management Committee*

Advisory Committees:

Publishing: Dr N Tringham (Chair), Dr J Chandler, Dr K Croft, Dr A Crosby, Prof C Cross,
Dr D Dixon, Dr D Dymond, Ms Jacquelené Fillmore, Dr J Howells, Mr P Jackson, Dr S Rose,
Dr M O'Sullivan, Dr W Stokes, Dr K Thompson, Ms I Watson, Dr M Winstanley

Education: Dr T Lomas (Acting Chair), Ms L Bankier, Mr C Haydon, Mr R Hughes,
Mr R Hunter, Dr A Jackson, Dr J Mattingly, Dr R Paley, Prof E Royle, Prof G Timmins

Conferences & Events: (Chair vacant), Dr M Escott, Mr G Gascoyne, Ms J Golding
Mr D Griffiths, Mrs P Merrick, Dr G Draper (*ex officio*),

Representatives:

Prof C Cross (Royal Historical Society), Dr T Lomas (Historical Association)
Dr N Tringham (VCH), Dr P Carter (The National Archives),
Dr C Haydon (British Records Association), Dr D Dixon (CILIP), Mr F Howcutt (FFHS)

Treasurer: Dr Ruth Paley

Editors: Dr Alan Crosby (*The Local Historian*) Dr Sarah Rose (BALH Reviews Editor),
Dr Jane Howells (*Local History News*)

Web Manager: Paul A Carter

Events & Development Officer: Dr Gill Draper

Membership & Financial Services: Kingston Smith Association Management

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)

**BALH HEAD OFFICE, CHESTER HOUSE, 68 CHESTERGATE,
MACCLESFIELD SK11 6DY**

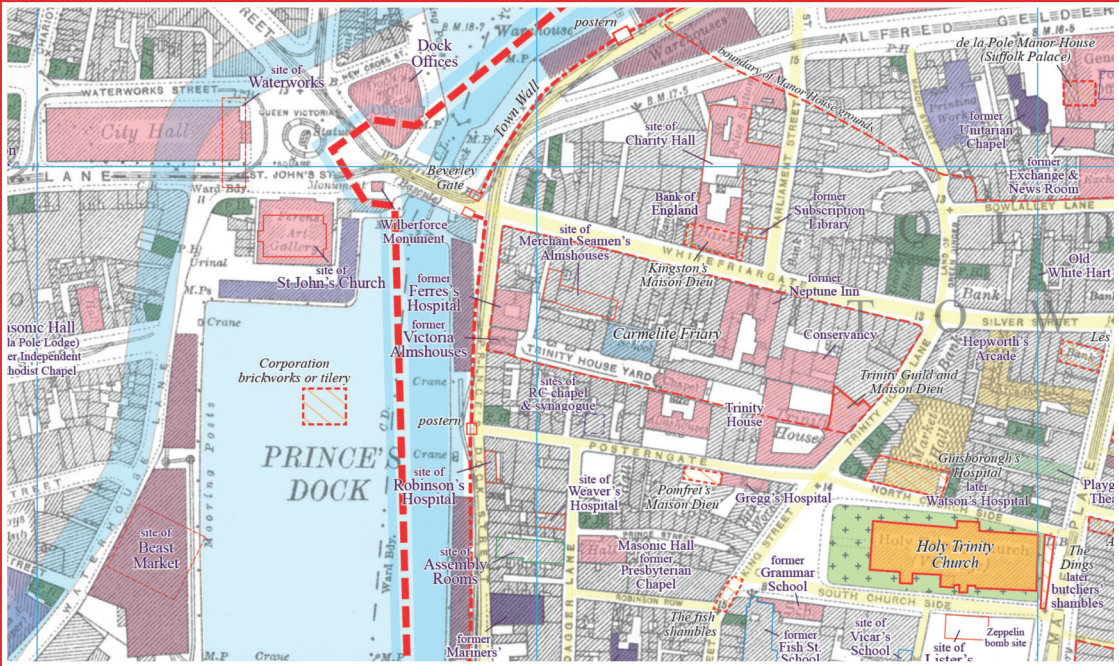
01625 664524 admin@balh.org.uk



The restored old city of Matera showing on the skyline building work ahead of European City of Culture 2019, see article p 4



Salmestone Grange in Margate, a medieval retreat for the abbot and monks of St Augustine's Abbey in Canterbury; today described as a '14th Century Wedding Venue', see article p 19



Detail from Hull map produced in Historic Towns Atlas series, see article p 13



Local History News

NUMBER 123 SPRING 2017

www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

Events 2017

3 June London – Local History Day (for full details and booking see overleaf)

8 August London – Guided visit to Houses of Parliament and Parliamentary Archives (see p31)

Events 2018

1 June York – Guided walking tour

2 June York – Local History Day

During 2017 BALH will be represented at

Wiltshire Local History Forum Spring Conference 6 May

Yorkshire Family History Fair 24 June

Shelswell History Festival 7 July

‘Yesterday belongs to you’ Beamish Museum 15 July

Bristol & Avon Family History Fair 9 September

U3A Peak District Family History Conference 15-16 September

Laugharne & District Historical Society Open Doors Day 23 September

London Family History Fair, Esher, 24 September

Hampshire Genealogical Society Open Day 8 October

West Surrey Family History Society Open Day 4 November

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.

LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2017

SATURDAY 3 JUNE 10.30 - 4.30

Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA

■ **HOUSING AND LOCAL HISTORY:** research agendas and practical issues

Alan Crosby (editor of *The Local Historian*)

Geoff Timmins (Emeritus Professor of History, University of Central Lancashire)

■ **BALH AGM**

■ **2017 LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS:** for research & publication, for a society newsletter, and for personal achievement

■ **BALH ANNUAL LECTURE:**

Local societies on the move: migration and social mobility in the middle ages

Christopher Dyer, Emeritus Professor of History, University of Leicester



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

Book early! Orders received after 10 May subject to availability.

Please ensure you have **either** provided an email address written VERY clearly, **or** sent a stamped addressed envelope with your completed form and cheque for your ticket and directions. You can also book on our website www.balh.org.uk/events

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

Please send me _____ tickets for the 2017 Local History Day at £25.00 (£35 for non-members)

A cheque for £ _____ payable to BALH, and a stamped addressed envelope, if applicable, is enclosed

☐ Please send me details of BALH membership

☐ Please tick here if you do not wish your name to be on the delegates list

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

NAME AND ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

Please give the name of everyone for whom you are buying a ticket.

BALH Annual General Meeting

2016 Minutes

MINUTES (abridged) OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held at St Andrew Holborn, London EC4A 3AB

on Saturday 4 June 2016 at 12.30 pm

Dr Tim Lomas, Chair of BALH introduced Professor Claire Cross, Vice President of BALH and welcomed members to the meeting. 65 members were present.

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 6 June 2015 were agreed.

2. Annual Report and Accounts for 2015

Dr Lomas introduced the Annual Report. He began with the sad loss of our President Prof David Hey in February, who would be much missed at BALH. Prof Cross also reported on an event she had attended at the Doncaster Heritage Festival in honour of Prof Hey which demonstrated the debt he is owed by local historians around the country.

Dr Lomas was very pleased to welcome Prof Caroline Barron who had agreed to accept the role of President of BALH. Prof Barron responded that she had been honoured to be asked, and looked forward to working with the Association.

Other changes during the year included the appointment of Paul A Carter as Website Manager; and the resignations of the Business Manager and Finance Officer. They have been replaced for membership and financial services with Kingston Smith Association Management. The early months of this new arrangement seem most encouraging. The bookstock is now housed independently, and administered by Nigel Tringham and Margaret O'Sullivan who were thanked for their work in this area.

Council and Committees met in March and October. All the advisory committees have had a busy year and overseen considerable progress. The Chairman thanked everyone who contributes in this way to the effective running of the Association.

The Local Historian, *Local History News*, the E-Newsletter and the website continue to maintain and expand communications with our members. A successful conference had been held at Leicester in the Autumn. The Education Committee is active in monitoring changes to the teaching of local history, and developing resources. A number of visits have taken place, and other events have been arranged linked with local groups. The Association has been involved in projects such as *Pauper Prisons ... Pauper Palaces*. Thanks to Dr Kate Tiller, BALH is actively developing wider links, for example with the American Association for State and Local History.

The Management Committee has also met regularly through the year to co-ordinate and monitor the health of the Association, and to oversee progress in line with the Development Plan. The Plan itself has evolved as changes have taken place in the organisation of BALH. A Structures Working Group is currently exploring whether there is a need to alter any other elements of the Association's work. The Annual Report and Accounts were noted.

3. Officers and Members of Council

The Vice-President thanks all members of Council and Committees for their valuable contributions during the year.

Dr Tim Lomas (Chair), Mrs Jacquelené Fillmore (Vice-Chair), Dr Ruth Paley (Treasurer), Prof Claire Cross, Mr David Griffiths, Mr Dick Hunter, Dr Joanna Mattingly, Dr Margaret O'Sullivan, Dr Winifred Stokes, Dr Kate Tiller, Dr Nigel Tringham. It was agreed that Dr Jane Howells would continue as Minuting Secretary at the Annual General Meeting.

BALH Annual General Meeting

**To be held at 12.30 pm on Saturday 3 June 2017
at Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA**

1. **Apologies** for absence
2. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting** held on 4 June 2016 (see overleaf) and matters arising
3. **To consider the Annual Report and Accounts for 2016**
4. **To elect Officers and Trustees of the Association**
5. **To consider membership subscriptions.** It is proposed to raise society subscriptions to £75 p.a from 2018 because of increased insurance charges. Other subscriptions remain unchanged.
6. **Any other business** notified by 5 May 2017

Please note that the full Minutes (item 2 above), Annual Report and Accounts (item 3 above) will be available from 15 May 2017. Copies will also be available at the AGM.

Nomination forms (item 4 above) are available from admin@balh.org.uk . Completed nomination forms *should be returned to the Chair no later than 5 May 2017. Matters of any other business (item 7) must be received in writing by post or email to the Chair by the same date.*

For all the matters noted above including items for the attention of the BALH Chair,
email admin@balh.org.uk or telephone 01625 664524 or write to
BALH, Chester House, 68 Chestergate, Macclesfield, SK11 6DY