

Local History News

Number 127 Spring 2018

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. 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.org.uk/awards or in the July 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

BALH Reviews Editor
Dr Sarah Rose
Department of History
Bowland College
Lancaster University LA1 4YT

BALH Awards Secretary
7 St Mark's Road
Salisbury
SP1 3AY

Cover Picture

Ashbourne Treasures Committee, illustrating detail from TNA, MPC 1/35,
see article page 14

Local History News

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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, with deadlines at the beginning of the previous months.

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
British Association for Local History.*

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Essential lynchpins

Alan Crosby

In the past couple of months I've learned of two local history societies in Lancashire which have been forced to disband. In one case this was because numbers attending meetings had dropped to unsustainably low levels – it was becoming impossible to afford room hire and payment to speakers, and apparently nobody was willing to take over the running and to rejuvenate the organisation.

The other case was particularly depressing, because Blackburn Local History Society had been at one time a large and thriving organisation. I've spoken to the Society on a number of occasions over the years and always enjoyed my visits, but here, as in so many other cases, the problems developed as the membership grew older and the work depended on ever fewer people.

The Society's website now simply states that

'After more than 28 years of promoting Local History in Blackburn and the wider Lancashire area, the committee decided to close in December 2017. Unfortunately, because of ill health, family commitments and the difficulties of advancing age [we] felt we could no longer administer the running of the society to the standard it deserves. This is why we took the difficult decision to end our activities and to redistribute the funds within our accounts to the Friends of Blackburn Old Cemetery [who] aim to maintain and conserve the cemetery, the final resting place of some of Blackburn's most notable residents. We hope you agree this is a fitting way to continue the spirit of the history society ... Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the Blackburn Local History Society since its inception in 1989. To every speaker, contributor to our newsletter and journal and every member who has attended a meeting or outing we are very grateful for your contribution and hope you continue your interest and research in Blackburn's local history'.

It is sad indeed that a town of 100,000 people cannot sustain a local history society, although the decision taken was entirely understandable.

And yet here in Preston the local history society, which was founded in 1948 and twenty years ago was moribund, now regularly attracts an attendance of over 150 people, and has had to move its venue to the parish church in order to accommodate the crowds. This is due, I'm sure, to the dynamism of a small number of people who gave the society a hefty kick up the rear and propelled it from the 19th century (or so it seemed) straight into the 21st. It has a very good website which includes a form of mission statement: *'The society is always looking for ways to improve their service to members and thus we have made many advancements over the last few years by improving sound and vision facilities, introducing the use of social media, such as a Facebook page for visitor interaction, queries and information seeking. The society also uses the fast and short message system of Twitter for breaking news and reminders of events'.*

So much depends on the individuals. In the case of Preston Historical Society its dedicated and endlessly enthusiastic AV, PA and PR man, Paul Swarbrick, died suddenly just before Christmas. A source of inspiration to many, someone who was a master of the media and a really practical organiser, as well as being passionate about the history of his home town, he is sorely missed. Time and again, when arranging to give talks to societies, and of course when visiting them, I'm dealing with the same familiar people, seeing the same familiar faces. Of course that's one of the pleasures – it's great in many ways – but I do fear for the future of some other societies ... the ones where the one person is simultaneously the programme organiser, the secretary and the chair, or where I say 'Hello, are you still doing that' and the reply comes, 'Yes, I am, I've been trying to hand it over for years but nobody's come forward'.

Welcome to Doncaster: a century of supporting refugees in South Yorkshire

Jude Holland

Doncaster 1914–18 is a First World War community heritage project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund with a grant of just under £1,000,000. The project encourages the people of Doncaster, and anyone with a connection to the area, to uncover and share their First World War stories through a series of events and activities running throughout the centenary until July 2019. The project aims to use stories of local people and places to encourage more participation in Doncaster's heritage through outreach activities, volunteering, the co-curation of exhibitions and crowdsourcing from the community. Engagement with cultural and heritage activities has been low in Doncaster, with almost quarter of the borough's wards in the highest 10% nationally for deprivation.¹

Doncaster 1914-18's 'Welcome to Doncaster' project, worked with refugees and asylum seekers living in Doncaster today to explore the welcome Belgian refugees received in Doncaster 100 years ago. As political events unravelled through 2016 and 2017, project staff felt strongly that exploring how Doncaster had welcomed refugees in the past, had the potential to bring together a transitory refugee community with a largely white British community who had voted overwhelmingly for Brexit, in the spirit of Jo Cox's words, 'we are far more united than the things that divide us'.²

Approximately 250,000 Belgian refugees came to Britain between 1914–18, and over 100 made their home in Doncaster. Today there are around 300 people living in Doncaster as refugees or who are seeking asylum from war and persecution. The majority come from countries such as Syria,

Sudan, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq. They are not permitted to work while their cases are assessed, often leading to loneliness and isolation.

Through the Welcome to Doncaster project, refugees and asylum seekers compared their experiences of living in Doncaster today with those of Belgian refugees a century ago through a series of creative, collaborative workshops. The outcomes — a film exploring refugees experiences then and now, and a series of artworks made by refugees and asylum seekers exploring this history — are displayed in Doncaster 1914–18's *Keep the Home Fires Burning* exhibition exploring life on the Home Front.

Prior to the workshops, the Project researcher worked with local historians and volunteers to uncover the history of Belgian refugees in Doncaster. Local newspapers — the *Doncaster Gazette* and *Doncaster Chronicle* — and regional newspapers accessed via the British Newspaper Archives, were useful sources for discovering Belgian refugees' lives, including where they lived, and how they were received by the local population.³ In addition, French- and Flemish-speaking Belgian newspapers were accessed via the Flemish Institute for Archiving's 'News of the Great War' project,

Belgian refugees, described as 'Victims of the German Hun', welcomed at Doncaster Mansion House in Nov 1914, Doncaster Gazette, Doncaster Heritage Services



were useful for the updates they provided on refugees' lives in Doncaster for families and friends still in Belgium.⁴ The minute books of the Doncaster Belgian Refugee Committee held at Doncaster Archives offered detailed evidence of the town's support provided for refugees, and donations and accommodation offered by local people.⁵

The first refugees arrived in Autumn 1914, and were welcomed by the Mayor and Mayoress with a reception at Doncaster Mansion House.⁶ Accommodation close to the town centre was offered via the newly-formed Belgian Refugee Committee by building contractor W.S. Arnold and Councillor E. Dowson.⁷ Neighbouring towns and villages also offered support for refugees. Workers at Thorne Colliery to the North East of Doncaster, found a house for, and funded the maintenance of, a group of three men and two women of 'the artisan class'.⁸ In Mexborough, to the West of Doncaster, local schools and the workers of Barron's and Waddington's works raised funds for refugees. Three Belgian families were housed in the pavilion of the Mexborough Cricket and Athletic Club.⁹

Although the area initially gave a strong welcome to Belgian refugees, there was some hostility, particularly as the war progressed. The *Doncaster Chronicle* reported on an accusation made in September 1916, against a young Belgian woman for stealing a pair of boots from a town centre bootmaker, which was later found to be untrue.¹⁰ By 1917, the Mexborough Athletic Club believed that four of the refugees they had initially supported were earning good wages and questioned their right to remain at the Pavilion free of charge.¹¹ However, there is no doubt that many in Doncaster and its surrounding towns and villages welcomed, and supported, refugees and though the majority returned to Belgium following the war, a few may have settled in the area. We know that in late 1918, Francis Martinus Diver, a Belgian refugee, married Florence Waite from Balby, whom he had met while working at the Great Northern Railway's Doncaster works and had a son.¹²

Our project workshops were developed over five months in consultation with refugees and asylum seekers and the voluntary groups that support them. This enabled the team to ascertain which languages were spoken by participants, and recruit appropriate translators for the workshops, build trust and relationships with the group and find which themes most interested participants. Daily life, food eaten



Syrian women creating artworks for inclusion in Doncaster 1914-18's Keep the Home Fires Burning exhibition, Doncaster Heritage Services

by, and entertainment experienced by refugees in Doncaster during the First World War all ranked highly, and the programme of workshops was adapted to include these topics.

Three workshops took place in Spring and Summer 2017 on each of these themes. Each began with a shared meal; an opportunity for participants to chat informally and share food from their respective cultures, which was important in building trust and relationships between participants, staff and volunteers. At each workshop the experiences of Belgian refugees in Doncaster were introduced, and participants took part in a carousel of hands-on activities exploring life for refugees during the First World War resulting in the production of artwork. The workshops were each supported by a translator, and included the chance for refugees and asylum seekers to record their own experiences as part of a film. The last workshop took place at Doncaster Mansion House, Doncaster's most significant civic building and one of only three Mansion Houses in the country. Refugees and asylum seekers enjoyed exploring this important historic building, where the first Belgian refugees were welcomed a century before. One participant, a refugee from Somalia, commented:

It was a wonderful day to let us know what the Mansion House was about, and why you guys keep a good memory of this building. It makes me feel so good, and makes me feel like I am home because of how good people are, and treat us the same. I really am so happy!

The project culminated in a celebration at Doncaster Museum to view the artwork and film created as part of the project. Participants and project staff were joined by representatives from the Conversation Club, Doncaster

Minster and Doncaster Central Learning Centre, three key voluntary groups supporting refugees in the town, the Northern Refugee Council and by the Civic Mayor and Mayoress of Doncaster.

The Welcome to Doncaster project has led to lasting partnerships for Doncaster 1914–18 and Doncaster Heritage Services, (who oversee Doncaster 1914–18, comprising Doncaster Museums, Doncaster Archives and Local Studies) with local networks providing support for refugees. Doncaster Museum now regularly contributes to a programme of ESOL learning for refugees and asylum seekers held at Doncaster Minster, and collaborated with refugees and asylum seekers from Africa in October 2017 on an exhibition for Black History Month. Welcome to Doncaster has improved the wellbeing of participants by developing their confidence, language skills and knowledge of the local area. As one participant commented,

It's been very useful to look at the life they [Belgian refugees] led, and hopefully I can learn something to help me in my new life here, so I can be a productive individual in society.

The project also encourages local people develop a greater understanding of refugees' lives when viewing the exhibition, *Keep the Home Fires Burning*. This opened at Doncaster Museum and Art Gallery on Saturday 7 April 2018 with free admission. For further details see: www.doncaster1914-18.org.uk or call 01302 734293.

Jude Holland is Project Manager of Doncaster 1914-18.

With thanks to my colleagues Victoria Ryves and Lynsey Slater for their help with this article and with bringing the Welcome to Doncaster project to fruition. Thanks also go to local historians Paul Fitzpatrick, Rose Brookes and Bill Lawrence for their help tracing how Belgian refugees were received in Doncaster and in its surrounding towns and villages.

Notes:

1 Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2015, <http://www.teamdoncaster.org.uk/indices-of-multiple-deprivation>

2 Jo Cox, Maiden speech to Parliament, 3 June 2015, Hansard, volume 596, column 675, <https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2015-06-03/debates/15060324000002/DevolutionAndGrowthAcrossBritain#contribution-15060332000038>

3 *Doncaster Gazette*, *Doncaster Chronicle* and *Mexborough and Swinton Times* on microfilm, Doncaster Local Studies Library, <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/>

4 <https://hetarchief.be>

5 Belgian Refugee Committee Minute Book, Doncaster Archives, AB2/6/7/1

6 *The Doncaster Chronicle*, 6 November 1914, page 2

7 *Doncaster Gazette*, October 30 1914, p 3

8 With thanks to Rose Brookes from the Thorne and the Great War project for the information on Belgian refugees in Thorne

9 Bill Lawrence, *Mexis, the Official Newsletter of the Mexborough and District Heritage Society*, 26 November 2013

10 *Doncaster Chronicle*, 1 September 1916, p 8

11 Bill Lawrence, *Mexis, the Official Newsletter of the Mexborough and District Heritage Society*, 26 November 2013

12 Findmypast, Yorkshire Marriages, December 1918

See also photograph on our back cover of the workshop at Doncaster Mansion House

Berkshire Record Society volunteers

see Peter Durrant's article
on page 12



Some of the volunteers on the Berkshire Schools in the Eighteenth Century project outside Tom Brown's School Museum in Uffington, 2017.

(Peter Durrant in the front on the left). The results of this project, edited by Dr Sue Clifford, will be published by the Record Society later in 2018

The Chilwell National Filling Factory explosion on 1 July 1918

John Beckett

On 1 July this year there will be a week of commemorations to recall one of the most catastrophic civilian events in Britain during the First World War. At 7.10 pm on the evening of 1 July 1918, at the end of a hot, sweltering day, an enormous explosion blew up part of the Number 6 National Shell Filling Factory at Chilwell, about five miles west of Nottingham. Estimates vary, but around 140 people died in the explosion, and up to 250 were injured. Shell filling was a dangerous job, and explosions were not uncommon. In terms of loss of life, however, the gross numbers at Chilwell made it the greatest single civilian fatality event of the war. Twenty-nine of those who died were women.

A week of commemorative events is being planned for the last week of June, leading up to a service on 1 July in St Mary's, Attenborough. The Chilwell site was within the ecclesiastical parish of Attenborough in 1918, and many of those who died were buried in the churchyard at Attenborough. A memorial, erected in the churchyard, is to be renewed. Events will include several lectures, including one on The Canary Girls of Chilwell, and another on the site of the National Shell Filling Factory. There will also be a concert, a play, and a period tea party with jazz band. The event will conclude with the service of commemoration on Sunday 1st at 6.30 p.m.

Q 30040: These women, manufacturing 6-inch (152mm) howitzer shells at the National Shell Filling Factory at Chilwell in

Nottinghamshire, were part of a huge wartime increase in female workers employed in the munitions industry.

© IWM

For more details see:

<http://www.attenboroughchurch.org.uk/CETprogramme.html>

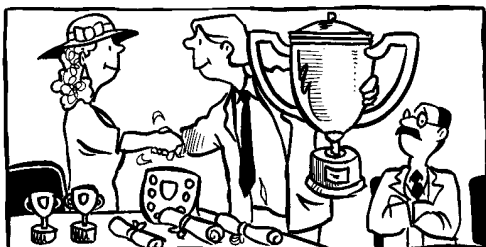
Shell production was critical to the successful conclusion of the war, and despite the horrific scenes at Chilwell on 1 July 1918 production was quickly resumed. Altogether, from the time it opened in 1916 until it closed for shell production in November 1918, Chilwell filled some 19.25 million shells, as well as sea mines and aerial bombs. It was an enormous effort which would undoubtedly have incurred much less national and international interest if it had not been for the explosion. Sadly, at the time, it was hushed up - the heavily censored local press was not permitted to print anything directly about one of the most extraordinary events in the history of the area.

Local women played a key role in production at Chilwell, and their work has recently been commemorated in an IWM posting at:

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/history/a-day-in-the-life-of-a-munitions-worker>



AWARDS



Always a Forester at heart

Jane Howells

Ron Beard was born and brought up in the Forest of Dean, where generations of his family had worked in local mines. He trained as a teacher and studied part-time for a degree in Geography at Birkbeck College in London. After a career in education in east London and Luton, he took early retirement in 1997, and a year later moved back to the Forest.

Promptly joining the Forest of Dean Local History Society, Ron was soon contributing to the work of the committee and served as Chairman. Membership grew quickly to around 200, the annual journal prospered and the website was developed. Taking particular responsibility for Research and Development, Ron used his experience of computers for mapping and Geographical Information Systems to introduce computer methods for local history, including collection, storage and retrieving information, compilation of CD Roms, construction of databases, scanning images, and much more.

In 1999 the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council asked local groups to take part in developing a photographic archive of local sites as a Millennium project. This involved

taking photographs and writing notes on 100 places of interest. Ron took responsibility for coordinating this project for the society, and then produced a CD ROM of the results. Ten years later the Society agreed to his suggestion that these sites should be revisited and with the help of volunteers Ron produced a revised CD showing the changes over the decade.

His next involvement was in producing a structured database to record sites and monuments in the local area. A number of volunteers produced notes and photographs for the database, which now provides information to be made available for the Society's web pages. Progress on this was interrupted by a new project, coordinated by Ron and supported by the Lottery Heritage Fund and the Nationwide Building Society, to provide a memorial for those who lost their lives in the iron and coal mines of the area. A member of the Society had spent a number of years collating information on mining accidents, and further research and investigation resulted in compiling records of such accidents dating back to the late

Ron Beard leading a group around the mining area of Bixslade in the Forest of Dean, taken at the site of the Union Mine and the memorial to four miners who lost their lives in 1902 when the mine flooded.



Ron Beard receiving his certificate from Professor Caroline Barron, president of BALH at Local History Day, June 2017



eighteenth century. The project produced a monument erected at a mine near the centre of the Forest, mine trail leaflets, Rolls of Honour to be placed in local libraries, and a CD ROM containing details of 600 mining fatalities.

A further example of the importance of Ron's computer skills was the preservation of a scrapbook kept by the grandmother of one of the committee members of cuttings from the local paper of reports on individuals who lost their lives in the First World War. These were scanned and made available on a CD for the history society in 2006.

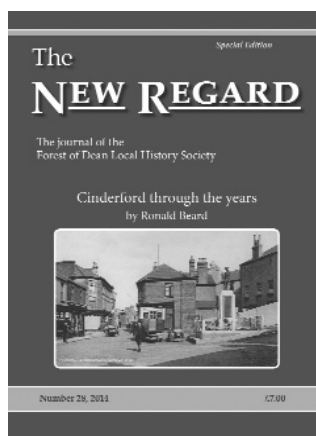
In 2008, following concerns expressed by members regarding the loss of heritage material caused by the activities of the Coal Authority in making old mine sites safe, Ron approached the Authority. A meeting was convened of interested parties and since then he has been able to keep a record, on behalf of the Society, of all mines when they are treated.

Ron's own research and publications include a monograph on the history of his native town of Cinderford which was published in 2014 for the society's *New Regard* journal.

FoDLHS is celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2018. Membership is now 300 and the journal in its 31st year. Ron has given the society many years of dedicated work, no less effective for being often quietly in the background.

<https://www.forestofdeanhhistory.org.uk/>

Thanks to Ron Beard, Keith Walker, Cheryl Mayo and Ian Standing.



Cover of *New Regard*
'Cinderford through the years'

Vision and leadership

Jane Howells

An environmental scientist by profession, Peter Matthiessen moved to the Lake District in 2001. Although interested in archaeology, he had not previously been directly involved in this field. He eventually became involved with the final year of a HLF funded project called 'Ringcairns to Reservoirs'. This was managed by the Lake District National Park Authority and included training members of the Duddon Valley Local History Group to undertake a Level 1 survey of the Duddon Valley, and enabling them to participate in investigations of a Bronze Age ringcairn.



Mervyn Cooper accepting the BALH Award certificate on Peter Matthiessen's behalf

Peter arrived at a critical time for the project as the results needed to be pulled together in a popular report to reach audiences that the technical literature report would not. He joined the editorial team, and made an excellent job of co-authoring the text.

from Professor Caroline Barron at Local History Day, June 2017

The enthusiasm of the Duddon Valley Local History Group saw them continue their research on the Duddon fells. Between 2009 and 2013 members carried out a number of level 2/ level 3 surveys of around 30 possible medieval longhouse structures, identifying 15 as being worthy of further investigation. Peter took the role of project leader during this time, ensuring that survey groups were organised, target areas identified and information collated. The final on-line survey report describing the findings of this campaign was co-written up by Peter and the main results were published in a peer-reviewed journal (*Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society* vol. 15, 117-138) in 2015.



One of the putative longhouse sites in Tonguehouse High Close, Duddon Valley, chosen for excavation

Thanks to Peter Matthiessen, Kenneth Day, Eleanor Kingston, Jamie Lund, and Mervyn Cooper.

(below) Celebrating the receipt of their HLF grant are (l to r) Jamie Quartermaine (head of Oxford Archaeology North), Ken Day (chair of Duddon Valley Local History Group), Bob Bell (treasurer of DVLHG), and Peter Matthiessen

Realising the significance of some individual sites, Peter led a successful bid to HLF and gained financial support from other funding bodies, including the National Trust and the National Park, both of which have representatives on the steering group organising the excavation of three chosen sites. This project involves the local community and local schools, and has been attracting national and international interest. The work has the potential to date the Norse settlement of Cumbria, and to reveal how Norse peoples and their descendants lived.

None of this would have been possible without Peter's expertise, vision and leadership. He is described by a referee as 'a delight to work with, having an easy going and collaborative working manner'. He has been able to encourage the Duddon Valley Local History Group forwards in exciting areas, providing its members with opportunities for research and enjoyment.



<http://www.duddonhistory.org.uk/>

the Duddon Valley Local History Group's website contains a large picture gallery of photographs recording their excavations, and much more about the area, as well as the group's other activities

New BRA Janette Harley prize

The British Records Association is pleased to announce that it is sponsoring a new prize, in memory of archivist Janette Harley (1951-2015). Janette was devoted to the BRA, which was a significant help to her during her early career. She remained a member throughout her life. At her death her family fulfilled her wish to bequeath a substantial capital sum to the BRA. This new prize is intended to generate interest in archives, and raise awareness of research and achievements in the world of archives.

An annual prize of £350 will be awarded to individuals or organisations for the best/most original piece of work published in a mono-

graph, journal or magazine, or otherwise made publicly available (such as a blog), which has promoted 'the preservation, understanding, accessibility or study of archives', the aims of the BRA. Applications are welcome from individuals, on their own behalf or on behalf of others, and from representatives of organisations. The prize will be available to anyone, including archivists, local historians, academics, genealogists and conservators

The deadline for applications for the inaugural prize is 30 June 2018. The prize will be awarded in October 2018.

Please visit the British Records Association website for further details:

<http://www.britishrecordsassociation.org.uk/the-janette-harley-prize/>

Berkshire Record Society

Peter Durrant

Berkshire Record Society, which celebrates its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2018, is a comparative newcomer to the world of record publishing. Quite why it was so late on the scene is something of a mystery. The county archaeological society was founded in 1871, and Berkshire's *VCH* was begun and completed by 1924. Various attempts to set up a record society had been made during the twentieth century, but none succeeded until a small group of academics and archivists, led by Professor Donald Matthew, head of the History Department at Reading University, began a campaign that led to the formation of the Society in 1993 and the publication of its first text the following year.

Why did we bother? In comparison with the days when the first record societies were set up, access to records and to copies of originals was immeasurably easier in the 1990s. Was there really a need to publish edited texts of local records? Moreover, the times were hardly propitious for setting up what was not only a scholarly venture but also, in effect, a small business. However, we believed that there continued to be a place for published texts, and the continuing health of other county societies encouraged us in this belief. There was also an element of local pride – we felt slightly ashamed that the Royal County of Berkshire was one of the few English counties without a committed record publishing programme. It was not that no records had been published: the *Berkshire Archaeological Journal* had printed texts from time to time, and other documents had been published in the Royal Historical Society's Camden Series and by the Oxford Historical Society; some texts had been published privately. But this was haphazard and occasional, and, we felt, a rather unsatisfactory state of affairs.

From the start we recognised that the programme would have to have both academic and general appeal. Though the membership list today looks rather different from the list of supporters of the Berkshire *VCH*, it remains the case that amateur enthusiasts and local and family historians figure more largely than professional historians and academic libraries – indeed, securing library subscriptions is becoming ever more difficult. The publishing

programme, both in the selection of texts and in the introductions and critical apparatus that supports them, would have to satisfy both scholarship and the needs of the general reader. We hope we have achieved this.

Our publishing programme has sought to embrace a reasonable diversity of texts, both in period and in record type. Post medieval texts predominate, but we are committed to including medieval texts from time to time. Cecil Slade's *Reading Gild Accounts, 1357-1616*, Margaret Yates's *Berkshire Feet of Fines, 1307-1509*, and the forthcoming edition of Reading Abbey records edited by Brian Kemp are examples. We have also published calendars (selected overseers' case papers, for example), an index (to Berkshire Archdeaconry probate records, 1480-1652) and a historical survey (of evidence for the progress of enclosure in Berkshire, 1485-1885). We have tried to mix new or relatively unfamiliar texts (correspondence of the Foundling Hospital inspectors in Berkshire, glebe terriers, probate accounts) with more traditional fare (the 1851 religious census; Tudor churchwardens' accounts). And we have published regional as well as local texts (the diocese books of Bishop Samuel Wilberforce, published jointly with the Oxfordshire Record Society, and the minutes of the Thames Navigation Commission, 1771-1790).

Clearly our programme depends of finding willing and competent editors who are able to deliver texts to the exacting standards that a record publisher requires. In this respect we have been fortunate. At the outset Professor Matthew secured a Reading University research award that funded a research assistant to prepare two volumes. Since then we have benefitted from the work of serving and retired academics, and we have also been well served by professional archivists and amateur historians. One of the volumes is based on a group project sponsored by the Berkshire Record Office and the Berkshire Family History Society, and another volunteer project – on eighteenth-century education in Berkshire – will form the basis of a volume to be published later this year. We have also embarked on other publishing ventures: it was the Berkshire Record Society that produced

both the first Berkshire Historical Atlas in 1998 and the revised and enlarged second edition that appeared in 2012 – both to great critical acclaim.

As anyone who has been involved in record publishing will confirm, it is hard work, and there are obstacles and pitfalls along the way. At our inaugural meeting, Mary Clapinson told the story of a record society that commissioned two volumes in 1930 and was still awaiting them three decades later (one having got through several editors in the interim). (That hasn't happened to us yet – but of course we haven't been going long enough). Then there are the inevitable problems of transcription. We haven't created a new ship of the line for the Royal Navy, which, as Paul Harvey recounts in his book *Editing Historical Records*, nearly happened to one society, but we have come close to perpetuating entirely fictitious individuals. It took some palaeographical endeavour to establish that the previously unknown C V Abbes was in fact Lord Craven, and that the unusually-named Cto Basley was in reality Ste[phen] Barker. And then there is the simple matter of economics: although we have benefitted from generous grants, membership subscriptions remain the basic source of income, and the struggle to maintain membership at a sustainable level is constantly with us.

We are proud of what we have achieved, but – in common with other county record societies – we need constantly to renew our membership base if we are to have secure future. If you have research interests in Berkshire why not join us: see our website, www.berkshirerecordsociety.org.uk, or contact me at peter.durant@reading.gov.uk.

If your interests lie elsewhere, then why not seek out your local county society: details can be found on the Royal Historical Society website, www.royalhistsoc.org, and look under Publications/National and Regional History. Who knows? You might well discover new opportunities for research, or new insights. Even if they are not in your field, many introductions are stimulating essays in their own right. You will know that you are supporting publications that have an enduring value and will outlast many monographs – and you will be building up an impressive library at a remarkably modest cost!

See photograph on p 7

Land of Oak and Iron update

Win Stokes

Various activities have been sponsored during the past year under the aegis of the **Land of Oak and Iron project** which focuses on the Derwent Valley in North West Durham, including conservation and archaeological skills training and research. Towards the end of the year a short book was published, encapsulating some of the aims of the project while making a serious contribution to the industrial history of the area.

Les Turnbull's *The Early Railways of the Derwent Valley* published by the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers in conjunction with the Land of Oak and Iron project looks at the network of wooden wagonways that took the coal mined on the slopes of the Derwent Valley down to the river Tyne for shipment to the London market.

The industrialisation of the Derwent Valley was already well under way by the end of the 17th century as demonstrated in Wrightson and Levine's pioneering study *The Making of an Industrial Society, Whickham 1560-1765*. Turnbull's book is designed to introduce the participant volunteers in some of the activities funded by the project to this aspect of their heritage so it is very visual and lavishly illustrated with maps and plans. Some of these are culled from the family papers of the landowners of the day or from the 18th and early 19th century 'view books' held in the Mining Institute. Turnbull has made extensive use of the readily accessible early Ordnance Survey maps produced at a time when many of the old wagonway routes were still visible.

During the 70s and 80s one by one the collieries, coke works and steelworks closed and very few of those involved in the de-industrialisation saw much virtue in conserving the evidence for posterity let alone building a 'heritage industry' around it. Now projects like the **Land of Oak and Iron** are being launched to discover what can be retrieved with volunteer labour and Heritage Lottery funding.

The funding supplied to launch Turnbull's book was money well spent and has allowed material otherwise hidden in record offices and archives to see the light of day in accessible form and accompanied by an explanation of its context. Hopefully the next ventures adopted by the project managers will be equally worthwhile in bringing to light the area's fascinating history.

Displaying Ashbourne's treasures – with royal approval!

Adrian Henstock

A highly successful local history festival was held during 2017 in the Derbyshire market town of Ashbourne on the southern edge of the Peak District National Park.

The town contains some 200 listed buildings, the majority being Georgian town houses in Church Street - described by Pevsner as one of the 'finest streets in Derbyshire'. In addition St Oswald's parish church is listed by Sir Simon Jenkins among his top 40 best churches in the country. The town is perhaps best known for its annual Shrovetide Football match – an authentic survival of mediaeval street football still played throughout the town, the river and surrounding countryside with passion.

The festival was a joint community effort led by the Ashbourne Heritage Society and the Ashbourne Old Trust, a corporate body created in 1585 to administer the newly founded Grammar School and later responsible for numerous alms-houses and other charities. Combining with other local organisations under the banner of 'Ashbourne Treasures' a successful application was made to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to hold a major exhibition of historical artefacts supported by publications, lectures and other events.

The exhibition was staged for three months in three separate venues – the County branch library, the parish church and the Heritage Centre. Over forty 'treasures' were identified, several being fixtures in the church such as specific monuments and windows as well as fragments of an Anglo Saxon cross shaft and the church's original consecration brass of 1241. Other exhibits included a Tudor funerary helmet, Civil War cannon balls, Victorian paintings and Shrovetide footballs. The most spectacular items related to Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School, the original building of which still exists although now converted into private apartments. The illumi-

nated foundation charter of 1585 includes a fine gilded portrait of the monarch attributed to Nicholas Hilliard, the foremost court miniaturist of his day. The original metal die or stamp for the school's seal was loaned by the British Museum and incorporates an image of a schoolroom with masters and pupils; it has a very rare cone-shaped handle with hand-beaten decoration of Arabic design and was probably imported into London via Venice.

Another outstanding item was an enlarged full-colour reproduction of a superb 'bird's eye' pictorial map of the town in 1547 held in the National Archives; this depicts streets and houses, the market place, manor house and church in fascinating detail (*see front cover*).

The exhibition attracted some 8,500 recorded visitors both from the town and over twenty one overseas countries, and was stewarded by no less than sixty five local volunteers.

In addition a series of ten weekly lectures and one guided walk took place. These were delivered by both academics and local specialists 'topped and tailed' by well-known TV historians Dan Cruikshank and Suzannah Lipscomb. The latter was intrigued to find that the school charter contained a prominent image of the badge of the Queen's mother - Anne Boleyn – nearly fifty years after her execution. Other events included public excursions to both Buxton and Sheffield Museums to view archaeological finds from the area.



Artist Sue Prince explaining one of the four panels of the folk painting to HRH Prince Edward.

The permanent legacy of the festival was two publications – *Ashbourne Treasures: a Town Heritage Trail* by Geof Cole (£2.50 or £3.70 post-free) and *Ashbourne - its History and Treasures from the Bronze Age to the Digital Age* by Adrian Henstock (£5.00 or £6.50 post-free; both for £9.00 post-free).

The latter is a new 128-page history of the town incorporating previously unpublished or less accessible research and highlighting major events such as the origins of the mediaeval town plan, the Jacobite 'invasion' of 1745 and the housing of French Prisoners-of-War on parole during the Napoleonic Wars. The book also served as the Exhibition Catalogue, containing captioned colour photographs of each 'treasure' in its appropriate chronological position.

Perhaps the most original and attractive legacy was the production of a 'folk' painting based on Swedish Bonad art – a six-metre long painting containing over an hundred individual vignettes from the town's history. The scenes were sketched by local artist Sue Prince and painted in by some 150 residents at an open event in the Town Hall. The original – likened by some to the Bayeux Tapestry – is now stored in the Derbyshire Records Office but aluminum and vinyl copies have been made for display at various sites in the town. Other permanent legacies included the provision of a new interpretative historical panel for the Memorial Park and the refurbishment of the metal finger posts directing visitors to heritage attractions.

Unusually for a local history event the festival was opened by a service of blessing for the treasures in the parish church. This was attended by both the Lord Lieutenant and the High Sheriff of Derbyshire as well as members of the Old Trust carrying their traditional silver-topped staves. Choral recitals were accompanied by readings not only from biblical texts but also from the new history of the town!

The culmination of the festival - which afforded a fitting tribute to the efforts of the organizers and volunteers - was a visit from HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, who was highly impressed by the depth of the community involvement in the event.

Publications available from the Visitor Information Centre, Town Hall Yard, Ashbourne, DE6 1ES (vic@ashbournetowncouncil.gov.uk) with cheques payable to Ashbourne Town Council.

<http://ashbournetreasures.com/wp/>

Local history in Birmingham

Chris and Gillian Stock

The Birmingham & Midland Institute (BMI) has been educating the population of Birmingham since 1854. It was originally founded for the diffusion and advancement of science, literature and art amongst all classes of people resident in Birmingham and the Midland counties. Charles Dickens gave the first public reading of *A Christmas Carol* on 27 December 1853. He read it over 3 hours 15 minutes in front of a crowd of 2,000 locals - taking only a 10-minute break for a quick swig of beef tea - and in so doing raised £300 for the then proposed Institute.

In the time we have been members of the BMI, we have attended several taught local history courses delivered by a number of very skilled and knowledgeable experts. Recently we enrolled on a course of 4 study mornings run by Stephen Roberts (Australian National University) which examined the lives of eight eminent Victorians, all of whom came from Birmingham. To regular classes of about 15 attendees Stephen offered a concise insight into the lives of clergyman George Dawson, the politician Joseph Chamberlain, the collector Joseph Gillott, the philanthropist Sir Richard Tangye, the photographer Sir Benjamin Stone, the newspaper editor John Thackeray Bunce, the poet and philanthropist Constance Naden, and the footballer Archie Hunter.

Urban growth began when Peter de Birmingham was first inspired to acquire a market charter in 1166, but the town's population exploded from in 73,670 in 1801 to 522,204 in 1901. Birmingham was at the forefront of worldwide industrial development in the Victorian era and at the same time the city addressed the challenges of urban living: government, housing, health and education. The course showed how these Victorian men and women played crucial roles influencing the development and challenges faced by this great city.

Stephen's relaxed manner allowed for stimulating debate on the various aspects of their lives and their impact on Victorian society within Birmingham. His understanding, expertise and passion for this period and the challenges it presented made the course stimulating, informative and humorous.

contd p 16

Hampshire Community Archive Forum

Phoebe Merrick

The Hampshire Record Office is the centre where all active local historians in the county are to be found at one time or another. As an extension of this role, they have now organised two Community Archive Forums, jointly with the Hampshire Field Club, the second one being in March 2018.

Local historians from across the county assembled on a Saturday morning to hear what is going on in the county. This year they heard speakers from four village local history societies and the Mothers' Union, as well as a discussion on dealing with photographs.

The more successful village groups, some of which are now called, 'Heritage' rather than 'Local History' have embraced modern technology with zest. In particular they are scanning the material that comes their way, both pictorial and text. The availability of digital images enables groups to fill their websites or mount exhibitions with relative ease, especially where the material was stored on the cloud. In particular it was noticeable how they encouraged visitors to their exhibitions to comment on their material, or bring in items to show them. Since they arranged to have scanners and computers available, they could copy anything that was produced, without having to borrow it.

Some of the work had been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and one group had found the application so complicated that they employed a firm to fill in the paperwork for them, but they had done wonders with the money in terms of informing their fellow-villagers of the history of the locality, and attracting new members, which made it worthwhile. One group was having great success with its Facebook page.

Christine Clode talked of the work she was doing on the history of the Mothers' Union, which was founded in Winchester Diocese and in particular drew attention to the many banners that the MU had produced over the years, and these can be seen in churches even where the branches have collapsed.

In Milford on Sea the local historians are photographing their whole village every ten years. A member of the audience reminded them to include the every-day items such as phone boxes or manhole covers, which disappear without warning. One speaker had been involved in re-writing the *Victoria County History* for Hampshire, which project started in the Basingstoke area. He said that two versions were produced. One of them was for easy reading by the public, but the other had every single fact footnoted, preferably from primary sources.

The meeting finished at lunch time, with requests that it be repeated next year.

contd from p 15

Over the last year we have enjoyed similar courses on 'Riots and Rebellions' and 'Chartism', and in March a 2-part course on 'Aspects of Victorian Life in Birmingham' covering Architecture, Newspapers and Periodicals, Manufacturing, Leisure, Religion, Transport, Housing and Schooling.

It is extremely important that the Birmingham & Midland Institute thrives and it should be supported by local government for the benefit of the population of this area. As well as promoting other subjects, the interest in the local history of this great city of ours is maintained by the Institute supporting the courses run by well-informed history experts.

see back cover illustration of the magnificent building that houses the BMI

apologies

In the last issue of *Local History News* we failed to acknowledge the image on page 6 of lock and key from Hereford Gaol (reproduced below), which was used by kind permission of Herefordshire Museum Service.



Stamford Bridge tapestry project

Debra Gleig



The Battle of Stamford Bridge on the 25th September 1066 was, arguably, the main factor in the outcome of the Battle of Hastings a few weeks later. King Harold Godwinson's Saxon army had marched from London, where they had been waiting for the invasion of William of Normandy. At Stamford Bridge, a few miles from the City of York, they faced the Viking army of Harald Hardrada, who had just defeated the Saxon earls Edwin and Morcar at the Battle of Fulford. The Saxons were victorious, practically wiping out a generation of Viking warriors. Three days after the battle, William of Normandy landed his army at Pevensey on the south coast, and King Harold's army had to return to face him.

In 2015, the Battle of Stamford Bridge Historical Society was preparing for the 950th anniversary of the battle, the following year. Tom Wyles, co-chair and founder of the Society, thought an embroidery in the style of the Bayeux Tapestry would be a fitting way to commemorate this event.

A team of volunteers from the village of Stamford Bridge and further afield have been working on the twelve panels since September 2015, under the expert direction of Shirley Smith, a professional textile artist and former York Minster broderer.

The group is busy taking the panels to various events throughout East and North Yorkshire where secretary Heather Cawte gives an expert and informative historical talk, and project leader Shirley discusses the techniques and materials used in the panels. The volunteer stitchers are also at the events, working on panels, or smaller pieces for members of the public to buy and help fund the project. The

one of the tapestry panels; the central narrative is embroidered first, then the borders and text are added later. photograph © Richard Winskill.

public can also sponsor a square of one of the panels, and have their name stitched on the tapestry for posterity.

The Stamford Bridge Tapestry has found a fond place at the heart of the village and wider community. The group meets at the community centre every week, and people often visit to see how the project is progressing. It is hoped to be able to permanently house the finished panels in the village as a fitting tribute to Tom Wyles, who sadly died in February 2016, only a few months after the stitching of the panels began.

A regular newsletter is available to anyone who wishes to see how the project is progressing. Contact Heather Cawte on publicity@stamfordbridgetapestry.org.uk

www.stamfordbridgetapestry.org.uk

Heritage Open Days 2018

two weekends
6 - 9 and 13 - 16 September

<https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/about>

Votes for women – and men! blog

Claire Skinner

There has been a lot of coverage in the media recently about the centenary on 6th February 2018 of the Representation of the People Act 1918 but much of this has focused on female suffrage. Of course this Act represented a big landmark in suffrage reform for men also. The focus, understandably, has been on the national picture and I hope in this article to shed some of light on Wiltshire's story as an example for exploring possible sources for local historians.

In the 1880s a large number of women began getting very involved in politics and local government, taking part as local organisers, canvassers and speakers for the different political parties, and serving on school boards and Boards of Guardians. The 1888 County Council Act gave female rate-payers the right to vote in Council and Borough elections. Feeling that the Liberal party were not doing enough to represent working people the Independent Labour Party was founded in 1893. In 1900 the ILP played a key role in founding the Labour Representation Committee which became the Labour Party in 1906. The party actively encouraged women to join, linking the quest for universal male suffrage and rights for working class men with the cause of women's suffrage.

There were two main bodies of women campaigning for the vote: the suffragists, who from the 19th century up to 1918 pursued peaceful means to acquire the right to vote, and the suffragettes, formed in 1903, who took a more militant approach. A mix of suffragists and suffragettes can be found in Wiltshire although the former far outweighed the latter, as far as we can tell from the local newspapers which are one of the key sources. Of the suffragettes, Edith New, a school teacher born in Swindon, became an activist for the WSPU. Edith chained herself to the railings at 10 Downing Street in Jan 1908, the first time that tactic had been employed. She resigned from teaching and devoted herself full time to the cause, ending up imprisoned and on hunger strike for her beliefs (see Volume 1 of *Swindon Heritage Magazine* for an article about Edith by Frances Bevan). It is perhaps no surprise that Edith came from Swindon as this town held important meetings about women's suffrage at

the Mechanics' Institute in March 1875 and again in 1882, featuring speakers from the Bristol Society. Devices had a branch of the WSPU, formed in 1911, with Katharine Abraham as Secretary, which organised a resistance to the 1911 census. In Trowbridge Lilian Dove-Willcox travelled from her home in Bristol to work as an organiser for the WSPU and was joint secretary with Miss B Gramlich of the West Wilts WSPU. Her entry in the 1911 census shows the use of it as a tool for protest by some suffragettes.

It is important to recognise that not all women were in favour of suffrage. The Women's National Anti-Suffrage League was formed in 1907 and locally Edith Olivier is an example of a Wiltshire person who actively opposed suffrage. For example, in July 1910 she wrote in her diary: 'Monday 4th To see lots of ratepaying women asking them to write to Mr Bathurst [local MP] & tell him they are not in favour of women's Suffrage. The bill comes on next week. He is said to be going to vote for it.' (982/44.)

Somewhat ironically, Edith went on to be a female town councillor and the first female Mayor of Wilton, in the 1930s, but back in 1910 she was very much still under the domination of her strict clergyman father. Perhaps she was never entirely won over – her memoir *Without Knowing Mr Walkley* published in 1938 states a little bleakly: 'Except for those who have to count them, votes seem to count less now that everybody has one...'

The outbreak of the First World War and the contributions of both women and working class men led to increased support for universal suffrage. Many women dropped the campaign for suffrage and worked wholeheartedly for the war effort (although some, such as Sylvia Pankhurst, took a pacifist approach). Throughout Wiltshire, and indeed the nation, women took up roles traditionally carried out by men in a variety of occupations including agriculture, and worked in munitions factories to make arms for the war. Many volunteered for the Red Cross or in one of the auxiliary services such as the WRNS, WRAF or WAAC, or helped out on the Home Front taking care of Belgian refugees or making comfort parcels for

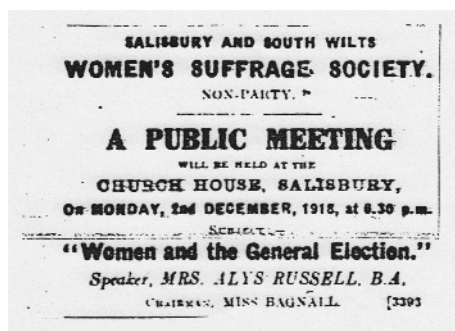
Prisoners of War. Meanwhile the enormous sacrifice of thousands of working men's lives made it seem unconscionable that they could be allowed to give their lives for their country, without the right to vote. The Home Secretary, George Cave, explicitly addressed this when introducing the Representation of the People Bill in Parliament. He said: 'War by all classes of our countrymen has brought us nearer together, has opened men's eyes, and removed misunderstandings on all sides.'

At WSHC we are privileged to have material relating to the drafting of the Representation of the People bill in collection 947, the papers of Sir Walter Long, minister of state for local government.

The bill became law on 6 February 1918. The Act extended the franchise for all men aged 21 and over, and women aged 30 and over who were able to vote in local government elections, owned property, or were a graduate voting in a university constituency. In Wiltshire this meant expanding the electorate to 134,000 people, which was 50% of the population. A lot better than the 0.5% of 1831!

I have tried to find evidence of individual women's responses to the Act but without success. Fortunately local newspapers help to tell us how the Act was received by some women: in Trowbridge 'a good muster of interested ladies' met to listen to a talk organised by the Women's Liberal Association on the new Act in February 1918. The new Act was described as 'the greatest measure of reform ever passed...' This was followed in August by registering to vote and then on 14 Dec 1918 the General Election took place, in which many women voted for the first time at a parliamentary election. Long describes it as 'the most momentous election for 100 years.' Again, newspapers are full of interesting stories of how it went. It is pleasing to read in the *Wiltshire Times* that women 'polled well, intelligently and enthusiastically, and many aged women took a delight in voting' (21 December 1918). The newspaper goes on to elaborate about the impact on individual women such as Mrs Collins of Westbourne Road, Trowbridge, who registered her first vote at the age of 93!

In terms of the outcomes of the Act for working men, their cause was championed for many years by the Labour Party in Wiltshire which owes a great deal to individual characters such as Reuben George of Swindon or Captain E N Bennett of Westbury, both of whom stood for election in 1919. We hold the minute book of the Westbury Labour Party for 1918 (4166/2/1) which shows their preparations for the elections that year; Captain Bennett had an 'uproarious reception' at the



conference immediately before the election! The labour candidates in 1919 only polled 17% of the vote, but they paved the way for later success such as the first Labour MP for Wiltshire in 1929, Christopher Addison of Swindon.

For women, the Act led to increased involvement in local and national government. The Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918 was passed in November 1918, allowing women to be elected to Parliament. Women aged 21 and over could stand for election, despite the vote only being available to women aged 30 and over. Of course no discussion of 1918 can be complete without mentioning that the franchise was not extended on an equal basis to men till 1928, when women 21 and over also gained the vote.

Locally, there are many examples of women becoming more involved in politics. The Godolphin School magazine (4312/13/B/11) from Salisbury includes a photograph and cuttings about the election of one of the school governors, Lady Hulse, as the first female town councillor for Salisbury, in 1919 - a source of much pride to the school and no doubt an inspiration to the female pupils.

Wiltshire's first female candidates for Parliament were Lady Currie, who stood at Devizes in 1922, and Mrs Masterman, who stood for the Salisbury constituency in 1929. Neither was successful. The first woman MP for Wiltshire was not elected until 1997 when Julia Drown became the Labour MP for South Swindon. In total Wiltshire has only ever had four female MPs, and all elected after 1997! Some battles for equality are, most definitely, still being fought...

Claire Skinner is Principal Archivist, Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre. This is taken from a longer blog that can be found on the History Centre's website at <http://www.wshc.eu/blog.html>

Comments on the First World War Centennial in Wales

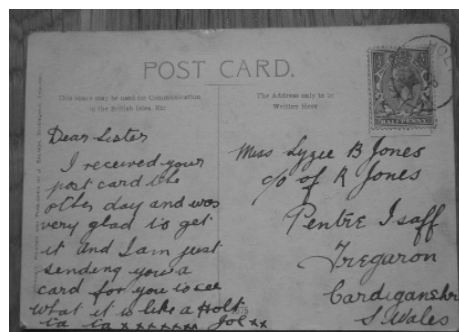
Margaret Escott

Cymru'n Cofio/Wales Remembers, is a vehicle for commemorating the First World War Centenary, sponsored by the Welsh government in partnership with the Imperial War Museum: BALH is another partner. In Wales, the commemoration draws heavily on locally generated research; and the localities, in turn, have hosted and commissioned multi-disciplinary depictions of life during the FWW and its impact on individuals and society. The intention is to boost public engagement and awareness of heritage, war and community by making local histories in Wales inclusive and all-embracing, while also adhering to the post-devolution objective of making Welsh history, including local history, less Anglo-centric by promoting public awareness of Wales's unique European heritage, through local and international engagement. It is therefore not surprising that the centenary of the battle of Passchendaele in November 2017 was marked by **Flanders and Wales: A First World War Symposium** supported by the Welsh and Flemish governments and Cardiff University. Research by academics and local historians into the 4,500 Flemish refugees settled in Wales featured prominently in the papers presented to the symposium and included thorough investigations by local historians into the Belgian and Flemish communities of Aberystwyth, Cardigan, Laugharne and other South West Wales towns. Devolved Heritage Lottery Funding has enabled projects, posters, publications and exhibitions to proceed and to be produced to the highest professional standards.

The National Library continues its enviable outreach and participation programme man-

aged by Owen Llewelyn. An important part of this is the creation and innovative management of publicly searchable databases, suitable for all levels of educational attainment. The **Wales 1914** website - The Welsh Experience of the First World War 1914-1918 - already has hundreds of thousands of images drawn from libraries, special collections' departments and museums throughout Wales. These will be linked to the vast array of digitized contributions from individuals, schools and community groups, including local history societies, via **People's Collection Wales**. Through the Library, assistance with digitization and training in recording video histories remains available to local historians and others in Wales. These are skills that can also be taken forward to new projects, such as 'unloved heritage' - an important new initiative targeting young people. Research blogging continues, including an exemplary weekly centennial production by Ceredigion Archives, representing both official news from the Front and the impact of war on the increasingly war weary local population. Reporting the Great War blog <http://ww1ceredigion.wordpress.com>: A weekly snapshot of news reaching Cardiganshire from the WW1 battlefields 100 years ago, and of the local experience of the war, derived from newspaper articles and other items in Ceredigion Archives' collections.

At Swansea and elsewhere, university public engagement (living history) centres have been very productive, holding training events and conferences in Cardiff (National Museum of Wales and the University), Swansea,



Aberystwyth and Bangor. Exemplary Arts and Humanities Research Council/Heritage Lottery Funded living legacies projects from Northern Ireland, Eire, England and Scotland have been showcased alongside award-winning Welsh projects and work on Welsh soldiers and personnel in Palestine and Flanders. Funding continues to 2019 and new projects, for example one assessing the ideological, social and practical impact of the FWW on Aberystwyth (town and gown); another on the war's impact on police forces in South Wales, are now underway. Retired staff and local volunteers and societies are the main participants and the outreach activities of libraries, museums, archivists, archaeologists and university departments in providing expertise and back-up to ensure quality and delivery with minimal wastage are vital.

Other 'new' projects draw on academic research to roadshow discoveries, teach the technical skills needed for additional local research and promote community involvement. Among these, local historians will, like me, benefit from looking out for a project led by Mike Roberts of Bangor University and Deanna Groom of RCAHMW 'Commemorating the Forgotten U-boat War around the Welsh Coast 1914-18 - Exploration, Access and Outreach' – the evidence it presents of coastal shipwrecks and of food shortages and rationing in Welsh towns is excellent. There are of course many other important projects with local appeal: Gary Ball's 'Project Zero' covers several communities as it traces the history of Submarine Scout Zero and the Airship stations www.projectzerohistorymatters.blogspot.co.uk; Stephanie Ward and David Wyatt of Cardiff University's 'Dusty's First World War' carefully investigates the origins of the Ely housing estate and 'Dusty Forge'; Greta Bertram of the University of Hertfordshire and MERL's investigation into 'Basket Weaving in the First World War' has universal scope and appeal; Gethin Matthews of Swansea University's study of unofficial war memorials, 'Welsh Memorials to the Great War', highlights the value and pitfalls of comparing sources and memorials and raises the question 'Why was the spelling of names often changed?'

War Memorial follow-ups have remained popular with local societies and sound county-based surveys are emerging - for example for Flintshire and Powys. Wales has approximately 5,000 War Memorials linking communities, military records and the dashed hopes and aspirations of military personnel and their families and friends – searchable stories that draw interest and attention to commemoration

and the impact of war. Work on memorials can still qualify for assistance from CADW as their conservator and research sponsors.

www.hlf.org.uk; www.cadw.gov.uk;
www.warmemorials.org; www.memorial-grant.org.uk; www.welshmuseumsfederation.org.

The centenary of the poet **Hedd Wyn**'s death at Passchendaele was marked by literary residences in Brussels and at Lloyd George's last home Ty Newydd near Criccieth. Exhibitions and illuminations in his honour were held at the National Library and the eisteddfod, followed in September by the official opening, with full community engagement, of his carefully restored family farm Yr Ysgwrn, near Trawsfynydd, where it is hoped that the involvement of the Snowdonia National Park and Welsh government staff in conservation, building, landscaping work and managing the new educational centre can continue. The Hedd Wyn exhibition, with its 3-D printed replica of the bardic chair he was awarded posthumously at the 1917 Birkenhead national eisteddfod, is currently at the **Welsh Folk Museum** at St Fagan's, where it will remain until August. Meanwhile people interested in everyday clothes and the food people ate on the home front should head to the **National Museum** in Cardiff, which from July will also host the 'Poppies for Remembrance' exhibition. Also from July, the **National Slate Museum's** Cofeb (memorial) exhibition will focus on the Nantlle Valley quarry's Pen-yr-Orsedd memorial. The **National Waterfront Museum** at Swansea's exhibition commemorating the 'Mutionettes' and 'Canary Girls' runs from September to December www.museum.wales. The Home Front and the impact of war on women and workers in all industrial sectors also feature prominently in the travelling theatrical productions of 'Forget me Not' and again in 'Rhondda Rips it Up', the Welsh National Opera's tribute to the suffragette Margaret Haig Thomas, Lady Rhondda.

www.avant.cymru;
www.wno.org.uk/event/rhondda-rips-it

As we commemorate the centenary of the **Armistice** in November 2018, attention will turn again to memorials and to Lloyd George's roles as prime minister and negotiator at Versailles. Interest will focus afresh on his North West Wales homes and heritage and the histories of the Caernarfonshire boroughs he represented in the House of Commons (Caernarfon, Bangor, Conway, Criccieth, Nefyn, and Pwllheli) and which returned him again in 2018.

SOCIETIES



Several items in this issue of *Local History News* emphasise the dependence of local history on volunteers willing to take on roles within societies and other organisations. Without chair-people, treasurers, minutes and programme secretaries, editors, fund-raisers and coffee makers it is impossible for such groups to continue. Alan Crosby's first endpiece on p 4 reinforces this, and there are more examples to follow here.

Filton Community History Group has been wound up after 20 years of oral history and publication. A celebration with other heritage groups in south Gloucestershire was held in March, with a cake and many memories exchanged on the achievements of the group, (key people photographed below). Jane Tozer has written:

'It all began with a millennium-funded history project for Filton schools. Jackie Sims, the enthusiastic driving force in the group, led the exploration of our Victorian history. We recorded the stories of older Filton residents. Memories of work and play going back to the 1940s were published locally in eight more booklets and one that was professionally published - *Filton Voices* (Tempus) came out in 2003. Many of the stories are about working at 'the BAC' [British Aircraft Corporation] but there are accounts of the butcher, the baker, the dairy, the laundry and many other businesses in Filton. Lottery funding and South Gloucestershire Council Small Grants have helped us to publish 170 interviews in all.



Jackie Sims was instrumental in getting Filton House listed. When, in 2006, we saw the BAC centenary coming up, we convened and hosted the group meetings which resulted in the area-wide 'BAC 100' celebration in 2010. For the BAC Centenary we did sixty five interviews which were locally published in 2011 in the book, *British Workmanship at its Best*. These interviews have also been made available to the archive at the new Aerospace Museum on Filton Airfield for their 'listening posts'. They are being kept for family and local history purposes at Gloucestershire Archives. Meanwhile Stan Sims has been keeping a photographic record of the changes in Filton's infrastructure, and several people have passed us their own collections of documents and photographs. These too will be archived. We published a history of the 1940 Filton Air Raid, helped Airbus while they were restoring Filton House, and have advised other groups on interview techniques and best practice, but now, reluctantly, we have decided it is time to retire'.

Thanks to **Avon Local History & Archaeology Newsletter** <http://www.alha.org.uk/>

The Midland Ancestor reports the closure of two branches, in Burton and Worcester, of the **Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy & Heraldry**. As they say 'branches can only run if members are willing to sit on that branch's committee'. The Society has both Lending and Reference Libraries located at the Birmingham & Midland Institute (see also p 15 of this issue). The Lending Library is open on Wednesday evenings and Saturday afternoons when there is a BMSGH meeting at the BMI. Reference Library hours depend on the availability of a volunteer librarian, but the normal timetable is 10.15 am to 3 pm Mondays to Fridays. www.midland-ancestors.uk

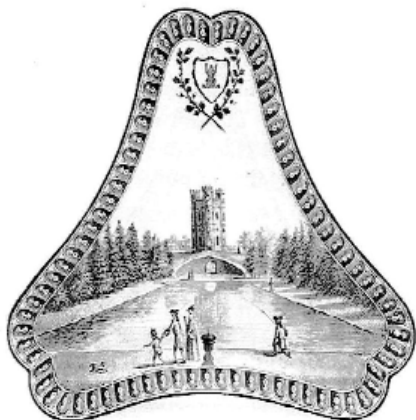
The winner of the 2017 Flora Murray Award was the **Holbeach Cemetery Chapels Trust**, for their wide-ranging project 'discovering, exploring and celebrating' the chapels and cemetery in Holbeach. Local children of all ages were drawn into activities - photography, stone masonry, story-telling, wild life, drama among them - and adults were involved in textile workshops and both family and local history research. **Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology**. www.slha.org.uk

In the year when there will be many local commemorations of the Armistice in 1918, **Romsey History Society** reminds us of the celebrations in the town at the end of the Boer War. Newspaper reports of 7 June 1902 state 'people at once began to put up flags and bunting as a token of gladness, and on the church steeple, Town Hall, Post-office and many other buildings the Union Jack was soon fluttering in the breeze. ... the outstanding show was to be seen

at the Workhouse on the edge of town ... [where] the display featured well-written mottoes including *Rule Britannia*, *Peace declared*, and *Our object gained*. At night the whole was prettily illuminated with fairy lights and the inmates were considerably provided with extra fare to celebrate'. *LTVAS Newsletter January 2018*
<https://www.ltvas.org.uk/>

Plans for the Autumn are well under way. **Stroud Local History Society** has already informed its members of the Five Valleys Great War Researchers' big exhibition to be held at the Museum in the Park from 3 to 11 November 2018. They need a cascade of poppies, so people are asked to start knitting, crocheting and sewing now. Local bands and groups of musicians are to be recruited to perform at the museum.
www.stroudlocalhistorysociety.org.uk

I have recently read *The Potters Hand*, by A N Wilson, and have been recommending it to friends and colleagues. It is a novel about Josiah Wedgwood, his family and business associates in the eponymous ceramics firm. While some characters and events are fictional, much is based on sound historical evidence. A reference to it caught my eye in an article in **Rickmansworth Historical Society's Review**. One section of the book focuses on the commission of a vast dinner and dessert service for Empress Catherine II, each piece to be hand-painted with a scene, building or landscape in Britain. One that is mentioned is the paper-mill at Rickmansworth (below). Graham A Martin's article describes how he set out to investigate and identify this mill. The service is now in the Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg, but it is well documented. It would make an interesting local project for other areas to follow. www.rickmansworthhistoricalsociety.btck.co.uk



In the *Bulletin of the North East Methodist History Society* Christine Caddy reports doing some preliminary reading before going to conduct the Chapel Anniversary services at Sancton, a small village on the Yorkshire Wolds. A minister was invited in 1786: 'they told him they could give him some refreshment on the evening of his arrival; that he should have Thomas Wallis's cottage to preach in; half of Thomas's bed for the night, provender and shelter for his horse, and a breakfast for himself the next morning; adding with an expression of regret that they could not give him a dinner'. Such was the life of an itinerant minister of the time. Worship has continued in Sancton ever since. www.northeastmethodisthistory.weebly.com

A miniature almanac has recently been made available on the ourhatfield.org.uk website. It is displayed in the Eight Bells pub in Hatfield and was scanned by historians at the University of Hertfordshire. Measuring only 2 inches by 1.25 inches, it was printed in 1743 and records standard items such as the church calendar, astrological dates, lists of monarchs since 1066, London Mayors since 1709 and so on. Handwriting on a blank pages states that it was given to Edward Hoy by his sister Mary Hoy in 1754 (illustrated below). hatfieldhistory@ntlworld.com



The importance of having somewhere to leave a lifelong collection of local historical material is often well covered in society newsletters. Someone is moving, either voluntarily or otherwise, to smaller accommodation and their accumulated documents, notes and photographs are at risk of destruction. **Towcester & District Local History Society Newsletter** recounts the acceptance of some important material relating to Groom and Tattersall, then acquired by Perkins, a key engineering firm in the area. Business records are often lost when enterprises change hands or close down. This acquisition has led to valuable articles about the local industrial past.
www.mkheritage.co.uk/tdlhs

The Wavertree Society *Newsletter* illustrates how vital it is that developers take note of history. Fieldway Green is an open space, one of the key features of the Wavertree Suburb Conservation Area. It is considered a vital part of the character of the Conservation Area, and is also part of the setting of listed buildings there. In recent years, despite the Green being in private ownership, the surrounding residents have organised and paid for its upkeep. When it was last sold in 2005, the purchaser only discovered too late that planners would not even allow a fence to be erected to control access. It is now on the market again and the Society have tried, so far without success, to persuade the auctioneers to ensure prospective purchasers are aware the land has no development potential.
www.wavertreesociety.org.

John Hassel (1767-1835) was a watercolour artist, engraver and drawing master, and published several books to do with 'gentlemen's estates' around London, particularly Surrey. **Horley Local History Society**. We illustrate one of his paintings of Horley Court Lodge, the seat of Mr Chessington, from the collection of Hassel's work at the Surrey History Centre. Others are held at the British Library.
www.horleyhistory.org.uk

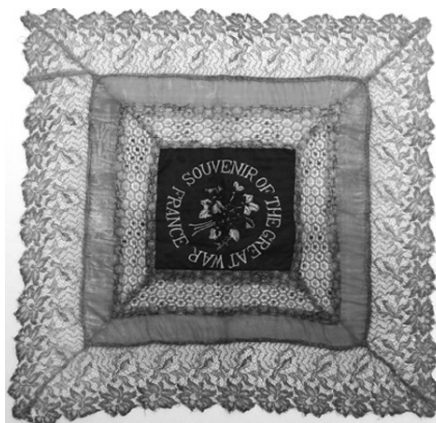


Society newsletters often report events, and their successful outcomes, designed to raise funds for the society's activities. Few societies have financial resources beyond their membership subscriptions, and sales income, with the occasional windfall of a legacy or donation. Hiring a meeting hall, paying speakers' fees, printing publications, conserving collections and similar activities all cost money. Grants are not always available for very small projects and can be difficult to obtain. Many groups have an annual cycle of Christmas cards and calendars, auctions of promises in the winter, a summer fete festival, and notecards and posters for sale. Do let us know if you have any specially unusual and productive ways of supporting your society.



Artists in the archives are making their presences felt:

During January **Cheshire Archives & Local Studies** hosted three workshops for artists from Visual Arts Cheshire. The artists were paired up with staff to identify items of interest to them. Some art inspired by archives will be on show in an exhibition at Weaver Hall in the summer. The artists were looking not only at the information contained in the documents but at textures and patterns. During the visit a number of unusual items were re-discovered including this beautiful First World War embroidered handkerchief.
<http://archives.cheshire.gov.uk>



Fiona Rainford is a volunteer artist in residence at **Lancashire Archives**. Her work will be in the Craft Open exhibition at the Platform Gallery in Clitheroe from 14 April to 23 June. The piece was inspired by a design in the Abbott & Co collection at Lancashire Archives (DDAB). The brilliant colours in her creative work need to be seen live to appreciate their real impact record.office@lancashire.gov.uk

A new website for **Oxford college archives** has been launched. The site includes a general introduction to the archives held by the Oxford colleges, many of which have been large landowners in Oxfordshire and beyond for centuries - hence their collections contain a great deal of information of interest to local historians. There are individual pages on most of the colleges (with further links to catalogues etc) and links to associated archives in the city and university. There is also an FAQ page, a glossary of special Oxford terms, and a bibliography. <https://oac.web.ox.ac.uk/> From **Oxford Local History Association e-newsletter January 2018**.



Keighley was the birthplace of renowned historian Professor Asa Briggs who died in 2016. Last Autumn **Keighley Library** received a presentation of over 20 books written by Asa Briggs to be a reference resource in the library. He is known to have studied there in his formative years, and to have valued the experience highly. Bradford Library Service was delighted to welcome this donation from **The Historical Association** in recognition of the work and wide influence of Professor Briggs. *The Historian Winter 2017/18*.

For over a year Cheshire Archives & Local Studies has been working closely with **Macclesfield Library** to prepare their large collection of local studies material to move to a newly refurbished area on the ground floor. In February a celebration was held to mark the opening of this new resource. There was a showing of North West Film Archive footage of old Macclesfield, children's crafts and a local history trail around the library. This free event proved popular and introduced many people to the collections. An online reviewer describes this as an 'amazing library with the friendliest staff you could find'.

Cheshire Archives & Local Studies News January 2018 <http://archives.cheshire.gov.uk> macclesfield.library@cheshireeast.gov.uk



Poole Museum Service has launched a project on Poole, the First World War and its enduring legacy. This project is being supported by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. The project sees the creation of a brand new website which provides resources on how the war affected all involved; from those who fought, and made munitions in the factories, to the nursed soldiers and fishing boats crews. The resources will touch upon all those in Poole. The website also charts the nature of post-war Poole, with stories from those who mourned the 700 Poole men who fell, the tales of returning servicemen, and memories of the women who had supported the war effort, but found they were no longer required in the peace. This was a time of enormous social change that helped to shape our modern society. 'We welcome all family stories, photos and mementoes from members of the public. With these local stories, we can continue to expand the resources available on our website'.

For further information visit www.poolewv1.org.uk or contact us on localhistory@poole.gov.uk



David Henry Lord, boy seaman, DCM. Seated with nurses 1916.

There are many exhibitions around the country marking the centenary of the 1918 Representation of the People Act. In **Sheffield** 'Changing Lives – 200 Years of people and protest in Sheffield' takes a broad approach, celebrating how the people there stood up for what they believe in over the past two centuries. It explores Sheffield's history of protest and activism, from the Radical Press of the 1700s, through to the miners' and steelworkers' strikes, and causes championed in the city today. 'Changing Lives' is part of their 2018 Protest & Activism season supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund marking the 100th anniversary of the Representation of the People Act. 'Changing Lives' will be complemented at the Millennium Gallery by 'Hope is Strong', a new exhibition exploring the power of art to question and challenge the modern world.

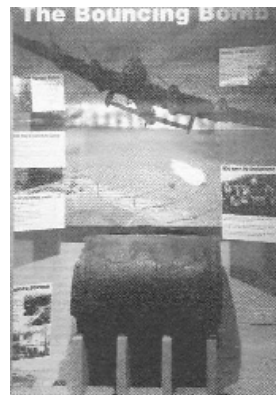
www.ms/weston-park/exhibitions/current/changing-lives-200-years-of-people-and-protest-in-sheffield



From 9 April, the **Imperial War Museum** Research Room in London is moving to an advanced ordering system. All their paper-based collections will be at IWM Duxford in a state-of-the-art store. This means they will no longer be offering an on-the-day service. Researchers will need to book morning and/or afternoon slots for specific dates, at least five working days ahead. The Research Room will be open Monday – Thursday 10 am–1 pm and 2 – 5 pm. For further details please see <https://www.iwm.org.uk/research/research-facilities>

An oral history exhibition about Tottenham will run from 25 March – 1 July at **Bruce Castle Museum**, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU. 'Memories of the High Road' allows visitors to hear tales of scrumping in orchards and swimming in the Moselle, shopping at Burgess's and dancing at blues parties; this exhibition reflects on Tottenham's living history and the resilience of community. Interactive audio accompanied by archive photographs and artefacts bring to life Tottenham's past. This exhibition is part of the North Tottenham Townscape Heritage Initiative and is supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund, RSA Trust and Tottenham District Charity. **Edmonton Hundred Historical Society**. <http://www.edmontonhundred.org.uk/>

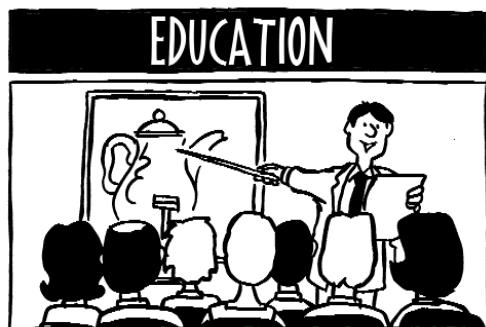
The Seaside Museum, Herne Bay in Kent, is profiled in the latest issue of *Aim* from the Association of Independent Museums. The Museum was founded in 1932, and was dependent on the knowledge and enthusiasm of individuals, particularly local doctor Tom Bowes. By 2012 it was in danger of closing, when a small group of local residents formed the Herne Bay Museum Trust. Re-opened in July 2015, the museum holds six temporary exhibitions a year, and has a busy education and outreach programme. One of their most prized exhibits is a prototype bouncing bomb which was tested along their coast a few days before the famous Dambusters Raid in May 1943. They are currently planning an exhibition to mark the 75th anniversary of the raid. <http://theseaside-museumhernebay.org>
www.aim-museums.co.uk



An exhibition at **Derby Museum** has marked the 20th anniversary of the implementation of the Treasure Act and the founding of the portable Antiquities Scheme with a display of objects from the museum's collection that were discovered by the public in the local area. The exhibition forms part of the national '20 Years of Treasure' celebrations organised in partnership with the British Museum. A hoard discovered last year contains three 'Cromford Dollars', Spanish American coins re-stamped for use by Cromford Mill to pay its workers. Accessing cash for wage payments provided a challenge for early industrialists as the price of silver restricted the production of domestic lower-value coins. Trade tokens are common in many areas. An alternative solution to the problem was to re-use foreign coins like these. One of 70 or so known users was the mill at Cromford. **North East Derbyshire Industrial Archaeology Society Newsletter Feb 2018**
http://medias.co.uk/?page_id=300



Cromford
silver dollar
marked 4/9
Cromford
Derbyshire

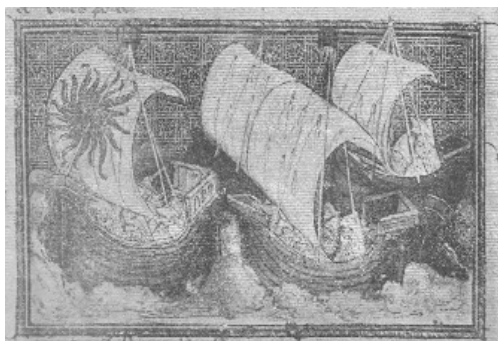


Southampton University has just launched an online database of medieval shipping and trade routes around Britain at:

<http://www.medievalandtudorships.org/>

'The Merchant Fleet of Late Medieval and Tudor England, 1400-1580' details merchant ships of England, Wales and the Channel Island and the voyages they made between 1400 and 1580. The database has the names of thousands of shipmasters and ships, and details of the commercial active ports in England over this period.

The project team is keen to receive queries and contributions (case studies of individual masters and/or ships, and any help with the location or re-location of ports) and would like to post as many case studies as possible on the blog, please feel free to contact them on: medievalandtudorships@gmail.com



The full programme is now published for 'Maritime Kent through the Ages', a conference on 22 - 23 June at **Canterbury Christchurch University**. On the Friday evening is a free lecture (with wine reception) given by Richard Holdsworth from Chatham Historic Dockyard, 'Kent, the Royal Navy and the Defence of Britain'. Amongst the papers for the Saturday conference, which cover a wide time span, is 'The advantages and enjoyment of Cinque Port status in the Middle Ages' by Dr Gill Draper, BALH's Events and Development Officer.

www.canterbury.co.uk/maritime-kent

More curious coins: *School Report* is the newsletter for **The Friends of The British Schools Museum, Hitchin**. Each issue contains an item called 'Collection Spotlight'.

Amongst their collections are some brass coins which are something of a mystery. One hypothesis is that they were 'reward money', awarded to pupils for exemplary achievement. They are in decimal denominations, and only had currency within the schools, and not necessarily between schools. One dated 1817 has Princess Charlotte's portrait on the reverse, marking her death that year, others are dated 1820 and 1841. friends@british-schoolsmuseum.org.uk



The British Library publishes a brochure 'Learning at the British Library' that describes the opportunities provided by the BL learning Team for primary, secondary and FE students and their teachers. The current schools and colleges programme focuses on their major exhibition 'James Cook, The Voyages', which runs from 27 April to 28 August 2018. www.bl.uk/learning

Favourite biscuits

see last paragraph on p 29



www.dublincity.ie/story/changing-face-jacobs-biscuits

News from Ireland in 2017

Alan Crosby writes: 'I must apologise for the absence of 'News from Ireland' for the past few issues. Our Dublin correspondent, James Scannell, has sent me material but I am afraid that I did not pass it on. James has now very kindly sent me an update, and here are some Irish highlights for the last year or so'.

Bray Library, Co. Wicklow, hosted an exhibition on **'Edward Lee and the Lee Family'**, curated by Michael Lee, his great-grandson. Lee was a businessman who in the 1880s built up a chain of drapery shops in Dublin, Rathmines, Bray, and Dún Laoghaire. Recognised for his caring attitude towards his employees, he was credited with introducing the half-day holiday to Ireland in 1889. He also had a strong social conscience and during the 1913 Lockout profoundly disagreed with the tactics used to break the strike. A man of moral courage, Lee was a member of Bray Urban District Council and was responsible for the building of the council's first houses.

In March a one-day seminar on **'Medieval Warfare in Down'**, held at Downpatrick, looked at the local history of medieval conflict, with papers on 'John de Courcy's dilemma: Downpatrick or Carrickfergus as his as his capital?', 'Edward Bruce in Ireland, 1315-18', and 'Defence in late medieval Down'. It was followed by a one-day tour, 'Explore tower houses and other medieval buildings of Lecale', in partnership with the Historic Environment Division of the NI Department for Communities.

Those interested in the medieval period had much else to enjoy. In mid-May International Museum Day included tours of the **'Medieval Life Exhibition'** in the Museum of Archaeology, Dublin, followed by the annual symposium of the Friends of Medieval Dublin. This involved lectures on the rediscovery of skulls from the site of the hospital of St. John the Baptist, osteobiographies of nine crania from the site, Dublin in its twelfth-century Irish context (aka 'It's the economy stupid'), archaeology of city centre sites, the Latin annals of medieval Dublin, taxation and resistance in fifteenth-century Dublin, brogues and shoes: footwear styles in late medieval Dublin, and the very intriguing 'Viking penguins and other unexpected outcomes from the 'Battle of Clontarf' website project'.

An open day at the **Baravore stone crusher building** in Glenmalur, Co. Wicklow, celebrated the rich mining heritage of the area. Visitors heard talks on the mining history of Baravore, the crusher building and the geology and forestry of the area; saw conservation work on the site; and visited an archaeological dig and an old mining trail. Also in Co. Wicklow, in April a particularly low tide gave an opportunity for the public to view the 6800-year old Bray Submerged Forest, with talks given on site.

Away to the west at the Museum of Country Life, Castlebar, Co. Mayo, Pat Broderick gave demonstrations called **'Take a Dash of the Churn'**, showing the traditional technique of butter-making, and visitors also learned about local folk customs. The museum hosted a series of talks on society in nineteenth century Mayo, looking at 'trade, commerce and characters of Castlebar', the Congested District Boards in East Mayo (1891-1923), and the reasons for emigration from West Mayo.

To mark the bicentenary of **Dún Laoghaire Harbour**, the town's new dlr Lexicon Library held an exhibition providing an account of the pier and harbour over the past 200 years. The Dún Laoghaire Borough Historical Society published a book, *A Safe Anchorage: Dun Laoghaire/Kingstown Harbour 1817-2017*, which includes numerous papers on the subject, ranging from the planning and building of the infrastructure, via the boatyards, storms and maritime disasters, maritime history focusing on particular vessels, flying boats, U-boats and mailboats. Social history includes work on the harbour police, important figures such as Marconi, and the leisure and recreational use of the harbour.

Commemorations of war and revolution continue. The **Museum of Decorative Arts and History** at Collins Barracks hosted a Leaving Certificate [GCE A Level] History Conference on 'Was Ireland really changed utterly after the Easter Rising?', while the **Irish Family History Society** held free public lectures on 'The family history of Thomas McDonagh (1878-1916) (one of the men executed after the Easter Rising) and 'Westland Row School and the six past pupils who died in 1916'. To mark the centenary of the death of Thomas Ashe, who was involved in the 1916 Rising (as Commandant 5th Battalion, Dublin Brigade), was arrested for sedition in 1917, went on hunger strike while held in Mountjoy Gaol, Dublin, and died in the Mater Hospital from complications arising from being force-fed, a series of events in September included lectures at the hospital on aspects of life, struggle and death.

In early June An Post (the Irish Post Office) issued a stamp to mark the centenary of the Battle of Messines Ridge, when soldiers from the 16th (Irish) and the 36th (Ulster) Divisions re-took the German occupied Flemish village of Wijtschate/Wytschaete. The stamp features the Round Tower from the Island of Ireland Peace Park in Messines, Belgium, which is a war memorial to the soldiers of all of Ireland, who died, were wounded, or missing from World War One.

In mid-February the **Genealogical Society of Ireland** vacated its Research Centre and Archive in Dun Laoghaire and placed all its records and archives material in store, having received a 'Notice to Quit' from Dun Laoghaire Port Company, who had allowed use of the premises free of charge for several years. At present the Society is looking for new premises in the Dun Laoghaire area.

Dublin City Library and Archives in association with the Irish Society for Archives and GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) Museum held a seminar, '**Hidden Pages in Irish Sports History**', presenting new developments in the subject and exploring the challenges and rewards of preserving and accessing sports-related archives.

In March the **Wicklow Heritage Forum** held a one-day seminar, '**Making Local History**' in the Brockagh Centre, Laragh. It aimed to highlight the work and role of local history societies in County Wicklow; to explore opportunities to support and strengthen this role; and to provide a networking opportunity for interested groups and individuals.

Dublin City Library and Archive, 138-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2, held an afternoon event on Wednesday 25 October for former employees of the **Jacob's Biscuit Factory**. It included talks, an opportunity to share stories and memorabilia from their working life, a visit to the DCLA exhibition 'Jacob's Biscuit Factory & Dublin: An Assorted History' ... and of course lots of biscuits! Former employees were invited to bring memorabilia or artefacts relating to Jacob's such as tins, labels, documents or photographs of staff outings or events, and with their permission, these were recorded and photographed on the day, the photographs being added to the Jacob's Biscuit Factory archive for researchers to access. Guests had the opportunity to do a short piece to camera, with Dublin City Council Historian-in-Residence Maev Casserly, about their working life. The information recorded was also added to the archive.

an extended version of this article will appear on our website

The Advanced Diploma in Local History – a personal experience

Mary Ratcliffe

Personal testimonies can be the raw materials for history projects. What follows are my reflections on a year-long local history course. There will be people reading this article who have undertaken or led this or similar courses, but we all have our own different experiences.

I'd been researching family history, with both my parents and ancestors having lived in Holbrook, a small Derbyshire village. I'd also been investigating the previous residents of our 1889 house in Wistow, a small village in Yorkshire. For both, I'd been reviewing the detail in census records. It occurred to me that there was an interesting project here somewhere to examine either or both village populations in more detail. But what specific questions would you pose? What sources, besides censuses, would you use? How could you make a project manageable?

Those questions remained with me for some time, soon after I had retired from a full-time career in science education. Getting interested in family and local history had made me realise how woeful my historical knowledge was. My formal education in history had stopped at age 13. To counteract the vagueness I had of English History, I took some short online courses and attended some classes at the University of York on aspects of regional history. My historical knowledge was improving but very patchy!

Flyers for the online Advanced Diploma in Local History with Oxford University had regularly appeared in the local library. It looked interesting – but it was a year long and required some experience in local history or historical knowledge. If I was going to make the commitment I would want to see it through as it wasn't that cheap. Also I thought a face-to-face course might be preferable for greater interaction. So I put the idea to one side for a couple of years while I continued researching my family history and got involved with local garden history research. Eventually I felt ready to take the plunge and embark on some substantial learning. My successful acceptance onto the Advanced

Diploma then involved a statement of application, academic references and completion of an initial exercise.

An obvious advantage of an online course is logging in from any location and working at your own pace. A disadvantage can be feeling isolated and not able to share ideas and problems easily. However, from the outset, we were organised into tutorial groups of about 12 students. These groups formed the basis for online posts to questions and exercises, and a weekly online group chat. We were a varied bunch – mostly from the UK; mostly finding time for study through retirement or part-time working but a few holding down full-time jobs; a spread of previous qualifications and experience including law, history, sciences. The keen interest in local history was the common factor.

It was odd to begin with to have a real time online chat with 8-10 people - typing in greetings, responses to questions, asking about progress while keeping track of the 'conversation'. But, led by a good tutor, we fell into an effective way of communicating. Of course we all missed some of the chats through other commitments and weren't always as diligent as we could be in the online tasks. However, there was good camaraderie and by the end of the course we really felt we knew each other although we'd never met. One thing we did all agree on was the demand of the course – about 16 hours a week of study was expected but we'd often spent far longer than that, either through interest or in getting to grips with particular topics. In my case, the range and depth of reading took time. For others, the novelty of manipulating databases proved demanding.

My husband got used to me spending considerable time each week on the computer or with my head in a book. Nothing new there! - but it did get far more intense when the six assignments were being completed. Completion of multiple assignments can sound daunting, but structure and choice were given for most.

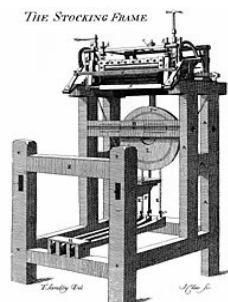
We didn't plunge straight into a local history project. Rather the first part of the course considered the nature of history and historical evidence; texts and sources about the history of the family. Case studies of particular communities, across different time periods, followed. It was easy to while away hours exploring detail, particularly when it came to population studies. A substantial part of the course was given over to interrogating databases to explore specific questions. There was quite a variation in prior experience of Microsoft Access amongst us - but plenty of

opportunity to share and support. I had used Access before in a limited way, but instruction in the techniques in using historical databases was very revealing.

Some of the things I learned were expected: the nature and evaluation of sources for different time periods; how to plan, execute and write up a time-limited project. Others were unexpected. I knew there were plenty of sources relating to the 19th century but hadn't realised the value of 17th century and comparative lack of 18th century sources. As a science educator, I'd been steeped in using the Harvard system of referencing when writing. The use of footnotes seemed awkward at first, but then liberating in supporting more fluent writing.

The final project was down to individual choice – the only stipulation being interrogation of databases and other appropriate sources. There was opportunity to choose from the several, very interesting ones to which we'd been introduced – e.g. records for Liverpool, Woodstock, trials at the Old Bailey. However, for me this was the chance to return to my original motivation. What could I constructively explore about the villages of Holbrook or Wistow? Then it came – FWK was a common abbreviation in census occupations for Holbrook. Framework knitting was a distinctive regional occupation. I decided focus on the experience of the framework knitters (FWK) of Holbrook, knowing comparatively little although I had visited the framework knitting museum in Nottinghamshire. [<https://www.frameworkknittersmuseum.org.uk/>]. Using the 1841-1891 censuses and a variety of other primary and secondary sources I successfully finished my 5000 word project. Without the ADLH instruction I would never have explored the range of relevant sources – e.g. tithe maps, trade directories, and, most revealingly, commissioners' reports on the welfare of framework knitters. Completion of the Advanced Diploma in Local History has given me new insight and experience. I hope I can put these to good use in further local history projects. And, of course, the ADLH did introduce me to BALH!

from Nottinghamshire
Heritage Gateway



books and publishing ...

The Half-Shilling Curate revisited

Sarah Reay responds to a review
by Jane Platt in *The Local Historian*,
vol.42, no.3, July 2017.

Thank you for your kind words in your review of my grandfather's story, *The Half-Shilling Curate, A personal account of war & faith 1914-1918*. I would like to take this opportunity to expand upon a couple of points that you raised regarding my grandmother and her role as a chaplain's and minister's wife.

First, we must turn the clock back. My grandfather, Rev. Herbert Butler Cowl was 22 years of age when he met Miss May Townsley whilst he was training to become a Wesleyan Methodist Minister before the First World War. May was five years his junior and was only 17 years old when they first met. Although it was very much a case of 'love at first sight', Herbert was supposed to be 100 per cent focused on his ministry and his studies. He kept his feelings to himself and only confided in his parents and his closest friends at Headingley College. As their feelings towards each other grew, they would have been very aware of their age difference. 'Little Girl' became one of the fond humorous pet names that he gave her which continued as their love blossomed and continued throughout their lives.

May was an only daughter, a Wesleyan Methodist and she had been very well educated. My 91 year old mother (May's daughter-in-law) refers to her today as being the 'greatest Lady' she ever met in her life.

Herbert and May were totally devoted to each other and as Herbert's role was to serve God, May dedicated her life to supporting him in all his work. Some of this came in the form of her cooking - she had a reputation of producing great spreads of homemade baking. However, her position in Herbert's life and the church was far greater. They were married in 1916. During the war, May's role would have been focused on nursing her new husband back to good health after the injuries he had sustained on active service. In 1920 Herbert and May's first child was born, but looking at local archive records, church minutes and local newspapers, it is evident that May was very



involved in the running of many women's groups in the local Methodist churches. These were predominately community based projects and fund-raising for worthy causes. As she became older, she most probably learned the art of asserting herself more and with age comes wisdom. Many who remember her talk of the beautiful person, but it is possible to be kind, caring and formidable!

Lastly, the subject of promotion: In today's world everyone seems to be clambering aboard the popular belief that promotion equals success and personal fulfilment. However, once again we have to remember that there is a huge difference between then and now - Herbert Cowl never sought promotion. He did mix in the highest circles of the hierarchy in the Methodist church. But, he simply wanted to serve God and be a man of the Church. Some readers might remember Rev. Derek Greeves of Westminster Central Hall in London - he described Herbert Cowl as his 'Father in God'. Herbert Cowl supported so many younger Methodist Ministers in their careers but he never wished for any form of promotion himself. Also, he avoided bureaucracy and paperwork whenever he could - this was observed in private letters throughout his life and during both world wars.

Herbert Cowl was first and foremost a Methodist Minister, he had a family and with his sweetheart at his side, he had achieved everything that he could have ever wished for in his life.

Spondon Archive Books

Anita Hayes

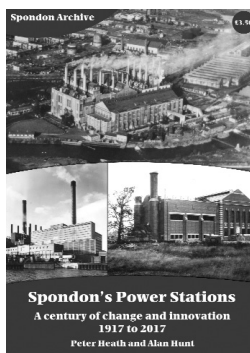
This publishing group was formed in 2011 with the aim of printing a series of books about aspects of Spondon's history. With a uniform A5 size, and style of cover, and an affordable price, it has become a collectable series. We have been reprinting and editing some of the old documents which are stored in the archives of Spondon Historical Society, with the aim of making them more widely available. New research has also been carried out on different aspects of local history and published as part of this series.

The idea for publishing these books came about when Spondon Community Association, which is an umbrella group for many of our local organisations, realised that in 2011 some of them would be celebrating significant anniversaries, making an appropriate time to record their history in some way. We wrote to the organisations; short histories and photographs flooded in. To make these stories widely available to the people of Spondon we decided that there was a market for a book.

Spondon Historical Society was their natural partner for this project. A joint committee was formed of seven people who were interested in working together on this idea. We chose the publishing name of 'Spondon Archive' and set ourselves up as a 'not for profit' partnership to record the history of Spondon. We bought our first set of 10 ISBNs; consequently we send a copy of each title to the British Library and five copies to the ALDL (Agency for the Legal Deposit Libraries), who submit them to the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh; Bodleian Library, Oxford; Cambridge University Library; Trinity College, Dublin; and National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. We donate copies of the books to the Local Studies Library in Derby and to Derbyshire Family History Society.

The cost of publishing 500 copies of our first book on Spondon Clubs and Societies in 2011 was nearly £1000. This was covered by a grant from Spondon Neighbourhood Board and a local fund-raising event.

The money raised from sales was intended to fund the cost of printing the next book, but as this was nearly ready for printing, more money was needed quickly. We applied for and received a grant from Derbyshire



Community Foundation and the book, 'History of the Malt Shovel', was printed just in time for Christmas and sold well. Since then we have published another ten books. After the first two print runs of 500 each, we reduced the number of copies to 250 for the next sets of books. We took the

opportunity to upgrade the quality of the covers last year and, because of the rising cost of printing, the price had to increase. It had been £2.50 for the previous five years and this has now gone up to £3.50. Reprints are easily available now from our printers and it means that our capital is not tied up in unsold stock. To date we have sold around 3,550 out of the 4,100 published. We are about to reprint three of the books, and we are in the process of writing four new books.

From the beginning we wanted to produce a professional product, especially as it seemed the committee wanted to write more books on local history. We learnt more about publishing skills as each new book came along: carrying out research; writing it up; checking details; setting up for printing; and designing the cover. We compiled a Style Guide so that, as far as possible, future books would conform to the house style.

Some reprints of historical documents have copyright implications which are not easily resolved, as was found when we decided to reprint 'A History of Spondon School'. It was written by a teacher in 1964, and we felt that it was a very good piece of research which deserved a wider readership. The editor spent about two years chasing the copyright.

One of our favourite books in the series is 'My Life in Spondon and other great places' by Frank Hooley. This was handed to us by Frank's granddaughter and was a real gift for local historians. It was written by Frank in 1974 and records his early life in Spondon, his experiences in the First World War and all the different engineering firms he worked for up until he retired in the 1960s. He was born in 1889 and although he left school at 14, he was a natural storyteller and writer.

His words did not need much editing; however, for the first time, we had to make a decision about censorship of a few of his stories, but the original sits in our archives for future reference.

The latest book about Spondon's power stations has sold surprisingly well, considering its often technical content. It came to us as a densely-typed history of the power stations associated with the Celanese plant in Spondon, and took a considerable amount of time for us to edit. The author had been the Site Services Electrical Engineer and worked for the company from the age of sixteen. He was responsible for all site mains power from 1970 until his retirement in 1997, and felt it was important that the history of the power stations was not forgotten when the Celanese plant closed in 2012.

The book tells us about a series of four power stations which sat on the plain below Spondon village for a hundred years. They provided the energy which allowed British Celanese to run its profitable industrial base here in Derby. The site was ideally situated next to the River Derwent with rail and road links to coal sources, which provided the essentials for power generation. This provided work for thousands of people over many years. The great buildings are now gone; power sources are changing and employment moves on, but the story of this great achievement lives on in our book.

With this book, for the first time, we feel we have gone beyond the bounds of local history and that it is of interest to anyone who cares about our industrial heritage.

All books have been well reviewed in the *Derby Telegraph* and our online publicity has meant that the books have sold around the world; mostly, it must be admitted, to former residents of Spondon.

Book published so far:

- *Spondon Clubs and Societies 1861-2011*
- *The Malt Shovel, Spondon*
- *Exploring Spondon – Walks through Spondon's history*
- *Canoes to Commuters – Transport in Spondon through the ages*
- *The Parish Church of St Werburgh, Spondon*
- *The Methodist Church, Spondon*
- *Spondon School (Vol.1 1662-1839) and (Vol.2 1839-1964)*
- *History of Spondon Cinema*
- *My Life in Spondon and other great places*
- *Scouting in Spondon*
- *Spondon's Power Stations: a century of change and innovation 1917-2017*

Books are available to buy from
Spondon Historical Society:
info@spondonhistory.org.uk

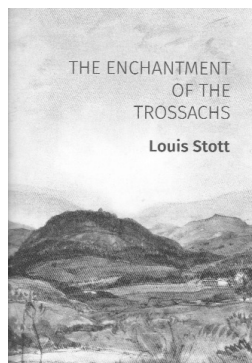
Anita Hayes is Chair of Spondon Archives publications group

The Enchantment of the Trossachs

Louis Stott

Loch Ard Local
History Group 2018
ISBN 978 1 9999487 0
2 £4.00
publishlochard@
gmail.com

Loch Ard Local History Group has made a successful initial venture into publishing. This book first appeared in 1992, and the updated second edition makes available to a wider audience an important aspect of the heritage of the area.



Aberfoyle's 17th century minister, Rev Robert Kirk, bears responsibility for the locality being known as 'the fairy capital of Scotland'. Rev Kirk (1644 - 92) ended his days there in close touch, it is said, with fairyland. While this might seem absurd to us today, the author Louis Stott examines the importance of Kirk within the context of early modern religion and superstition. At that time there was no scientific explanation for many of the vagaries of daily life, and certainly none that was accessible to rural communities. However, much can seem to make sense if you allow for the involvement of fairies. Indeed the Royal Society itself investigated both natural and supernatural phenomena.

Robert Kirk was minister of the parish of Aberfoyle from 1685 to 1692. He was a noted scholar, in particular he was the first to translate the metrical psalms into Gaelic, and he oversaw the publication of the most significant Gaelic Bible of the 17th century.

Kirk's book *The Secret Commonwealth* has appeared in numerous editions over many years, in varying relationships with an original manuscript. It was written in 1691 in the midst of widespread interest in second sight from, amongst others, Robert Boyle, Samuel Pepys, and Bishops Gilbert Burnet and Edward Stillingfleet. One version of its subtitle explains its purpose: *An essay on the nature and actions of the subterranean (and for the most part) invisible people heretofore going under the name of faunes and fairies, or the lyke, among the low country Scots, as they are described by those who have second sight.* Interest was revived in the early 19th century by Sir Walter Scott, and the legend of Kirk's death, spirited away by the fairies when walking on a hill near the manse, dates from this time.



Louis Stott
(left) at the
book launch

Louis Stott was presented with a BALH Award for Personal Achievement in Local History in 2017 (see *Local History News* 125 p10). Here he examines the way Kirk's work has been used by subsequent writers from the 18th to the 21st century, and how it has been influential on the history of the local area and on folklore studies more broadly. There is a glossary of different types of fairies, a note on the 'topography of fairyland', and a valuable

Guided walks in York Friday 1 June 2018

We are delighted to be able to offer a choice of two walking tours in the afternoon of Friday 1 June, the day before Local History Day.

You can indicate your interest on the booking form when you order your Local History Day tickets, or send separate details, or enquiries, by email to secretary@balh.org.uk. Both walks start at 2.15 pm and should not take more than two hours.

These tours are free but small donations at each venue would be welcomed.

1. York Churches Tour

2. A walk through Nonconformist York

Further details were published in *LHN* 126 (p29) and may be requested from secretary@balh.org.uk. Act promptly - the lists are filling up!

Notes News Issues

Local History Day 2018

As this issue of *LHN* goes to print there are still tickets available for Local History Day in York on 2 June. We look forward to seeing many members at this event for what promises to be a most interesting programme. The booking form is in the Supplement here, and on our website at www.balh.org.uk/events

In response to comments in the last members' questionnaire Local History Day is located on a three-year cycle, so we will be at a venue in London for the next two years, 2019 and 2020, and then in a different region for 2021. It has always been a great pleasure to meet people who don't find it easy to get to London, so please take this opportunity and come to York!

Society members 1

The central insert in this issue if the updated Insurance Fact Sheet for society members. Please detach and keep this for reference.

Society members 2

On page 1 of the Supplement in this issue is a note about a special offer for society members to book tickets for their members. Bring a group to Local History Day in York.

AGM

Members are welcome to attend and contribute to the Association's Annual General Meeting, held during Local History Day. The draft agenda and last year's minutes can be found in the Supplement. Final full versions may be requested from BALH Head Office after 18 May and will be available on 2 June. The draft Trustees' Report for 2017 was published in *Local History News* 126. Please note a correction on p31 in the list of people given Awards for Personal Achievement, the fourth name should read Louis Stott.

The local history of the courgette ...

Alan Crosby

In 1954 Elizabeth David, establishing herself as Britain's greatest 20th century cookery writer, wrote her classic *Italian Food*, which after long, grey and dismal years of rationing brought a vivid colour to the imagination. On page 259, in characteristically forthright style, she lambasts an awful instance of the food which made English cookery so notorious: 'Why do we have to leave marrows growing until they are the size of pumpkins and taste of nothing but water? With the exercise of every possible ingenuity I have never succeeded in making this ghastly vegetable anything but absolutely tasteless'. She then introduces an exotic idea: 'Baby marrows, on the contrary, are delicate and delicious, but why on earth should we have to pay five shillings a pound for imported zucchini, when we could perfectly well grow them ourselves? Perhaps some enterprising market gardener might consider doing something about this?'

Six years later her greatest work, *French Provincial Cooking*, appeared. On page 255 she introduces *les courgettes*, explaining that these are 'very small marrows, grown from varieties of which the fruit can be picked while immature'. Observing nonchalantly that 'Their initial preparation is much the same as that of aubergines' (in 1960 how many British people had ever heard of an aubergine, let alone cooked one?) she suggests that courgettes are

'versatile as well as delicate'. Ideas for using them include four simple recipes and suggestions such as frying, baking, boiling and stuffing. Betraying her patrician social status, David observes that 'the larger ones can even be stuffed with a Lobster Mornay mixture to make a charming and original dish'.

But change was on the way. The 1963 second edition of *Italian Food* includes a footnote under the tirade about the ghastly vegetable and the plea for somebody to do something: 'Poupart's, market gardeners of Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, have done something. Their courgettes, in the shops in increasing quantities every year since 1957, are exquisite. I call that real progress'.

The local history of the courgette ... in my northern town I can go to my local Morrison's and find courgettes at any time of the year, and often yellow ones or round ones too. They are utterly unremarkable and it is hard to imagine how this humble vegetable was so rare and wonderful sixty years ago. But of course that's true of much else - I grew up in commuter belt Surrey, where my Mancunian mother had an Italian friend (both exiles in a foreign land) and learned mouthwatering dishes such as *spaghetti bolognese* with real sauce (*il sugo vero!*), not the travesty so often served outside Italy. It needed garlic - and finding garlic in Woking was challenging. So my father, who worked in central London, used to buy garlic off a barrow in a Soho street market and return with the precious bulb on the 5.30 from Waterloo.

I don't think mum cooked with olive oil at this stage - that came in a small bottle from the chemist and was used medicinally, pouring warm drops down a child's ear, then plugging it with cotton wool. I still recall the strange sensation! Now I splash extra-virgin olive oil around with reckless abandon. For all the madness of today, there is, as Elizabeth David said 55 years ago, 'progress'. And, like it or not, the advent of the supermarket was responsible for the changing diet of the nation during my lifetime. I've said it before and no doubt I'll say it again - the history of the supermarket is a fundamentally important aspect of local history. When did you first see an avocado? Get researching!

So now you've actually bought
an avocado, what do we
do with it...?



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/Board of Trustees 2017-18:

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Professor Claire Cross
Mr Dick Hunter
Dr Tim Lomas (Chair)
Dr Jonathan Mackman
Dr Joanna Mattingly
Mrs Susan Moore
Dr Margaret O'Sullivan (Treasurer)
Dr Winifred Stokes
Dr Nigel Tringham

Advisory Committees:

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Dr D Dixon, Dr D Dymond, Ms J Fillmore, Mr P Jackson,
Dr M O'Sullivan, Dr W Stokes, Dr K Thompson, Dr M Winstanley,
Dr A Crosby (*ex officio*), Dr J Howells (*ex officio*), Dr S Rose (*ex officio*)

Outreach (Education/Conferences/Events): Dr T Lomas (Acting Chair), Dr V Bainbridge,
Mr C Haydon, Mr R Hughes, Mr R Hunter, Dr A Jackson, Dr J Lutkin, Dr J Mackman,
Dr J Mattingly, Mrs S Moore, Prof E Royle, Prof G Timmins, Dr M Escott,
Mr G Gascoyne, Ms J Golding, Mrs P Merrick, Mr P A Carter (*ex officio*), Dr G Draper (*ex officio*)

Representatives

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

Editors: Dr A Crosby (*The Local Historian*), Dr J Howells (*Local History News*)
Dr Sarah Rose (*BALH Reviews*)

Website: Paul A Carter

Events & Development: Dr Gill Draper

Membership and 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 Board of Trustees, with two advisory committees dealing with publishing and with outreach. 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	£75.00
Institutions	£38.00
Overseas	£42.50
School	£25.00

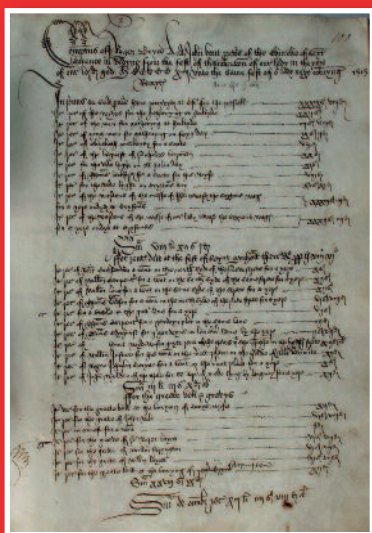
(Libraries subscribing to *The Local Historian* via agents are treated as Institutional members)

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

01625 664524 admin@balh.org.uk



Refugees and asylum seekers visit the Doncaster Mansion House, where refugees were welcomed on arrival in Doncaster in 1914, Doncaster Heritage Services, see article p 5



A page from the churchwardens' accounts of St Laurence, Reading. These were published by the Berkshire Records Society in *Reading St Laurence Churchwardens' Accounts, 1498-1570*, edited by Joan Dils (2 vols, 2013) see article p 12



The Birmingham & Midland Institute, see article p 15



Local History News

NUMBER 127 SPRING 2018

www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2018, FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, YORK, 2 JUNE 2018

SPECIAL OFFER FOR SOCIETIES

Have you thought about coming to Local History Day to be held in York on Saturday 2 June? There's a wide ranging and informative programme – from transport history focusing on resources at the National Railway Museum in the morning to the main lecture on 'The English Parish Church- Past, Present and Future' by Professor John Beckett in the afternoon, plus chances to browse stalls promoting local history groups and offering opportunities to purchase publications.

Societies in membership of BALH can make a block booking for Local History Day 2018 for 3 or more of their members at the special rate of £25 per ticket (including lunch). To book for your society, please email admin@balh.org.uk or write to **BALH, 68 Chestergate, Macclesfield, SK11 6DY**, or telephone **01625 664524**. Payments by cheque payable to BALH or electronically to **British Association for Local History** sort code 40-52-40; account no. 00009383.

The booking must be in the name of your society and if you can provide an email address, e-tickets will be sent for you to distribute.

Please book early! Places are limited and bookings after mid May will be subject to availability.

Events 2018

1 June York – Guided walking tours (see p 34)

2 June York – Local History Day (see over leaf for further details and booking)

During 2018 BALH will be at

5 May 'The Name Event', ILEC Exhibition Centre, Earls Court, London

22 September 'The Family History Show' Sandown Park Racecourse, Esher

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 2018

SATURDAY 2 JUNE 10.30 - 16.30

Friends Meeting House, Lower Friargate, York YO1 9RL

- **RAILWAY RECORDS:** Alison Kay, Archivist, National Railway Museum, York
- **BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY AGM**
- **2018 LOCAL HISTORY AWARDS:** for research & publication, for a society newsletter and for personal achievement
- **BALH ANNUAL LECTURE:**

The English Parish Church: Past, Present and Future

John Beckett

Professor of English Regional History, University of Nottingham

Tickets (*including morning tea/coffee and sandwich lunch*) £25 BALH members £35 non-members
Please book early. Bookings after 18 May 2018 are subject to availability

HOW TO BOOK

- Complete the tear-off form below and return it with your payment (cheques payable to BALH) to the address below. Please ensure you have **either** provided an email address PRINTED VERY CLEARLY, **or** a stamped, addressed envelope for your ticket and directions.
- You can also book online at: www.balh.org.uk/events
- Walking tours on Friday 1 June featuring local chapels or medieval churches may also be booked. Places are limited.

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

Please send me _____ ticket/s for 2018 Local History Day at £25 (BALH member) or £35 (non-member)
I enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to British Association for Local History, with (*if applicable*) a stamped addressed envelope

Please indicate your choice for lunch: ☐ meat ☐ vegetarian ☐ vegan
☐ Please indicate if you would like further information about the walking tours.

(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME	
ADDRESS	
POSTCODE	

TEL. NO
EMAIL
Please give here the name (<i>and lunch preference</i>) of everyone for whom you are buying a ticket; and state any other special dietary requirements for anyone attending.

BALH Annual General Meeting

**Friends' Meeting House, Lower Friargate, York, YO1 9RL
Saturday 2 June 2018**

**The Annual General Meeting will start at 12.30pm
with the President Professor Caroline Barron in the chair.**

The AGM is for members only, but guests are welcome.

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting** held on 3 June 2017 (for abridged minutes please see below) and matters arising
- 3. Report from the Chair**
- 4. To consider the Annual Report and Accounts for 2017**
- 5. To consider proposed changes to the BALH constitution**
- 6. To elect Officers and Trustees of the Association**
- 7. To consider membership subscriptions.** No change is proposed to subscriptions.
- 8. To appoint independent examiners of the Association's accounts**
- 9. Any other business notified by 10 May 2018**

Please note that copies of the proposed constitution (item 5 above), the full minutes for 2017 (item 2 above), and the Annual Report and Accounts (item 4 above; after 18 May) will be available from BALH Head Office: email@ admin@balh.org.uk or telephone: 01629 664524 or write to: BALH, Chester House, 68 Chestergate, Macclesfield SK11 6DY. Copies will also be available at the AGM on 2 June. Nomination forms (item 6 above) are available on the BALH website: www.balh.org.uk or from BALH Head Office. Completed nomination forms should be returned to the BALH Chair no later than 10 May 2018. Matters of any other business (item 9) must be received in writing by post or email to the Chair by 10 May 2018.

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

*The draft Trustees' report for 2017 was printed in **Local History News** no.126
(Winter 2018) pp.30-31.*

BALH Annual General Meeting 2017

MINUTES (abridged) of the Annual General Meeting held at Resource for London, 356 Holloway Road, London N7 6PA on Saturday 3 June 2017 at 12.30 pm

Dr Tim Lomas, Chair of BALH, introduced Professor Caroline Barron, President of BALH, and welcomed members to the meeting. 60 members were present.

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 4 June 2016 were agreed.
2. Annual Report and Accounts for 2016

Dr Lomas introduced the Annual Report. He noted that the past year had seen both rigorous debate and much activity within the Association. Membership had held up remarkably well. Behind the scenes major policies and other documents such as the Development Plan are now in place, and systems dealing with membership and finance have been professionalised under our relationship with Kingston Smith Association Management. Challenges such as a VAT review and best-value checks on the insurance scheme have been met. The systems and procedures were the envy of many other organisations.

Dr Lomas thanked the Trustees who had reached the end of their terms of office, Ms Jacquie Fillmore and Dr Ruth Paley. During the year Dr Kate Tiller and Mr David Griffiths also decided to resign as trustees due to other commitments. Dr Tiller chaired the Structures Working Group in 2016; the Association is working on the recommendations in their report. Mr Griffiths chaired the Events Committee in succession to Mrs Jan Shephard. Jane Howells has decided not to continue her contract for administrative support.

We were very sad to learn of the deaths of two long serving supporters of BALH, Michael Farrar and Norman Alvey.

Some highlights from committees included:

Education: Geoff Timmins' book on *Exploring Local History in Schools* is in preparation.

Publishing: a new edition of Jacquie Fillmore's Internet Sites Directory is available. Dr John Chandler was thanked for advising Publishing Committee on using 'print-on-demand'.

Visits and conferences: joint events, such as recent conferences in Cornwall and Devon, had proved successful, thanks to the local partners. George Gascoyne was organising a visit to the Parliamentary Archives in August 2017. There was a strong belief in jointly badged visits.

The Trustees were keen to encourage membership of committees. All areas of experience and expertise are welcome. A website strategy is a priority for the coming months. This is an important part of our communication with members, together with the highly-regarded quarterly publications *The Local Historian* and *Local History News*.

In answer to a question from the floor about the annual accounts, Dr Margaret O'Sullivan, Trustee and Treasurer elect, explained that all administration costs of the Association now appeared under the heading of 'Governance and Support Costs' having in previous years been split between there and 'Charitable Activities', so there was an apparent rise from 2015 to 2016 in 'administrative fees' and a fall in 'business and administrative support'.

The annual report and accounts were accepted by the meeting.

3. Membership Subscriptions

The proposal to increase the annual subscription for society members to £75 from 1 January 2018 was accepted.

4. Officers and Trustees of the Association

The following were elected to serve as Trustees of the Association: Dr Tim Lomas (Chair), Dr Margaret O'Sullivan (Treasurer), Dr Virginia Bainbridge, Prof Claire Cross, Mr Dick Hunter, Dr Jonathan Mackman, Dr Jo Mattingly, Mrs Susan Moore, Dr Winifred Stokes, Dr Nigel Tringham and Ms Isobel Watson.

The President welcomed the new Trustees, Dr Bainbridge, Dr Mackman and Mrs Moore.

5. Messrs Moore Stephens were appointed independent examiners of the Association's accounts.

The Annual General Meeting closed at 12.50pm.