

Local History News

Number 132 Summer 2019

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 Stephen Roberts 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

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Front cover

Paul Carter, BALH Website Manager, introducing the new website at the BALH AGM on 1 June. Chair David Killingray and Treasurer Iain Taylor on the platform (see page 10)

Local History News

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

BALH
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FOR LOCAL HISTORY

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 email: agcrosby@waitrose.com

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 acting BALH Reviews Editor is Alan Crosby; if you have a newly published work, either as an individual or a society, please contact him with the information. He will discuss listing and/or review copies with you. 77, Wellington St, Preston PR1 8TQ agcrosby@waitrose.com

**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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Centre pages

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At peace, in a remote corner

Alan Crosby

The evocative ruins of Creevelea Friary stand a little way outside the little town of Dromohair in County Leitrim, on a slope above the River Bonet. You approach them from the town by a riverside path and see the grey stone walls ahead of you. This was the last Franciscan friary to be founded in the British Isles, in 1508 by Eóghan [Owen] O'Rourke, the lord of West Breifne (which covered roughly the present county of Leitrim) and his wife Margaret O'Briain, daughter of one of the kings of Thomond (the area of counties Clare and Limerick).

The friary was accidentally burned in 1536—an unusual occurrence, since destruction by fire was normally the fault of internecine Gaelic disputes or attacks by the English—and then in the late sixteenth century, as the Reformation slowly and falteringly took hold and the northern part of Ireland was convulsed by war, the friars were driven out.

They returned in 1618, were driven out again by the English (blame Cromwell, of course) in the 1650s, and finally gave up the struggle at the end of the seventeenth century. The church remained technically in use for parochial purposes until 1837, although an engraving of 1791 shows a roofless ruin hardly different from that which stands today and the tower had by then been converted into a dwelling.

Today it's in the care of the State, which in Ireland tends to imply a slightly more insouciant approach to heritage than we're perhaps used to in Great Britain. There's a helpful information board, but the physical remains of the site are less trimmed and polished, which is not necessarily a bad thing. Besides, it would be difficult to adopt the full Historic England approach because the friary is still in regular use as a graveyard. Now that really was a surprise (though it shouldn't have been, since I know a good many such places in Ireland where, after abandonment, interments continued (the next day we noticed exactly the same at the ruined friary beside the harbour in Donegal town).

At Creevelea there are modern graves, from the past decade, in the cloister, the crossing, the nave, the chancel, bright with polished headstones, gold lettering and floral tributes. Initially, used as I am to the smooth green turf and manicured setting of a typical English monastic ruin, I was taken aback, but after a little time it seemed entirely natural. This has, for over half a millennium, been a sacred place, a sacred space, and it's perfectly logical that it should continue in use as holy ground. Styles of commemoration have changed—after all, for very many decades this was such a poor part of a poor country that to have a headstone was quite exceptional—and the modern stones contrast with the small number of eighteenth and nineteenth century ones. But the continued use of the monastic precinct for burial has surely meant better protection for the ruins, regular maintenance and less deliberate or casual decay.

That in turn means that the most charming feature of Creevelea has survived when it might otherwise have been lost long ago. Tucked away on the west face of an arch on the north side of the cloister walk is a battered and worn but still delightful carving, dating from the early sixteenth century. It shows St Francis standing in a pulpit. To his left is a stylised tree, and the saint is preaching to little birds which are perched on the stick-like trunk. It's a celebrated story which goes back to the lifetime of Francis, was painted by near-contemporary masters such as Giotto, and was even rendered musically by Liszt ... but I particularly like the naive yet effective portrayal of that universal late medieval tale, sculpted by an unknown artist five hundred years ago in a remote and beautiful corner of north-western Ireland.

see back cover photograph



‘Tireless and indefatigable’

Jane Howells

Eric Apperley’s invaluable computer knowledge, skills and experience have been put to good use by a number of organisations involved with local history in Cumbria. An electronics engineer, he retired in 1990 as Principal of an FE College. Eric volunteered with the National Trust and was asked to develop the touch-screen information units for the Beatrix Potter Centre being opened in Keswick. He then moved on to creating a database for the records there.

Next, in 2002, he became Publications Editor for the Cockermouth Civic Trust. Their existing material on Cockermouth history needed updating and reprinting, and new publications were written.

Shortly after that a local history group was formed in his village of Papcastle. Eric wrote *Papcastle History*, which was well received, but the publication date was the night of the Cockermouth Flood! A fortunate outcome of that disaster was extensive archaeological work in which Eric and his wife took part. He wrote up the results as an addition to the earlier book, *Roman Papcastle*.

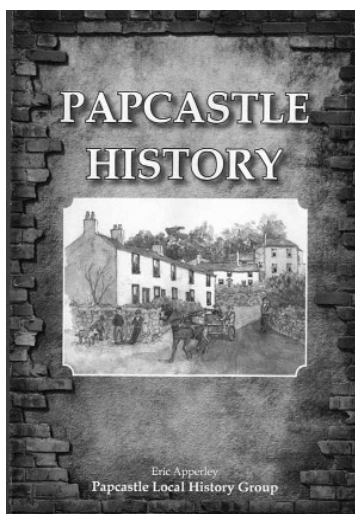
Roman watermill base during excavation (below) and bathhouse (right); overleaf cover of Papcastle History, illustrated by local artist Susan Fleming



Eric Apperley with information board on ‘Roman Papcastle’

Then, in 2011, Eric started on the work on which his nomination for a BALH Local History Award is mainly based. He joined the volunteers working on the Victoria County History of Cumbria, one of the most active counties currently operating.





To start with, Eric wrote a draft VCH history of the civil parish of Papcastle, and a number of pieces about diverse aspects of Cumbrian history including leisure and tourism. Then he took on the Cumbria Country History Trust website, and became the main contributor to the online database developed to complement the formal histories being researched and written.

He drew outline maps for all of the 348 civil parishes, one for each township page on the database. The VCH histories are gradually being produced, but meanwhile Eric has spent a vast amount of time identifying other resources and linking them to each township page. These include numerous photographs, relevant articles in the *Transactions* of the Cumberland & Westmorland Antiquarian & Archaeological Society (digitised a few years ago), over 6,000 listed building entries and much more.



the centre of Papcastle

*photograph by Alexander P Kapp, from Geograph
553034*

This has created one of the foremost hubs for information on Cumbria history, and goes way beyond what would have been possible if the CCHT was dependent only on paid staff and Trustees. As his referees have written: 'Eric remains enthusiastic about the website and is full of ideas about how to make further improvements'; 'Sometimes we struggle to keep up with him!'.

'Tireless and indefatigable' in his dedication to this project, we are delighted to make the award, but were sorry Eric was unable to join us at Local History Day to receive his certificate in person. Visit the VCH website to appreciate his work.

With thanks to Eric Apperley, Tiffany Hunt, Sarah Rose, and Bill Shannon

VCH website
www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/

village website
www.papcastle.org.uk

HELP WANTED

'For going with the king's carriage'

Hertfordshire Record Society will soon be publishing the accounts of the Ashwell overseers of the poor, c 1664–1723. While transcribing the accounts the editor has come across some rather puzzling entries, and we wondered whether anyone else working on locally generated accounts of any kind has come across similar wording. There are a number entries (only one in any year) like the following:

Paid to John Plomer for going with the king's carriage £1 0s 0d

We would also like to know to what 'going with the king's carriage' is referring. We have a couple of ideas, which are plausible, but in accounts from elsewhere the meaning might be obvious.

Although the Ashwell entries are in the accounts of the overseers of the poor, perhaps elsewhere they occur in constable's accounts, or churchwardens' accounts, or even those of the overseers of the highways.

If you have any ideas about this rather enigmatic phrase, please get in touch:
Heather Falvey, Honorary Secretary,
Hertfordshire Record Society
info@hrsociety.org.uk



‘Of immeasurable value to the community’

Jane Howells

Joy Hockey was nominated for ‘her lifelong efforts in researching, teaching and celebrating the history of Wallasey and Wirral’. Now aged 93, Joy continues to be actively engaged both in her profession and in her area’s local history. As a (relatively) ignorant southerner I looked up the places mentioned by her referees, and discovered (hoping Wikipedia is correct) that ‘New Brighton is a seaside resort forming part of the town of Wallasey within the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral, in Merseyside’.

Joy was born and brought up on this north-eastern tip of the Wirral peninsula. Finishing her schooling in the later stages of the Second World War she started work as a ‘tracer’ – they were nearly all girls – in the Liverpool City Engineers’ and Surveyors’ Department. She was called up, aged 18, and directed to replace a male member of staff in the Wallasey Town Planning Department. After the war she returned to her first ambition and completed her honours degree at the Liverpool University School of Architecture, writing her final thesis on a new Pilot Station for the Port of Liverpool. Her successful professional career included a commission for the Pilot Station on Anglesey, and ecclesiastical and commercial buildings as well as houses, and conversions.



Joy Hockey receiving her BALH Award certificate from Professor Caroline Barron, BALH President, at Local History Day, June 2019

Joy’s enthusiasm for the sea, for sailing, and for the maritime history of the area directed her many other activities. Once she discovered the pleasure of local history teaching, initially by accident, sharing her interests in classes, walks and writing became very important in her life. Generations of students have been inspired by her, and have followed her to Wallasey Historical Society, of which she is now President. Involvement is key, including

*Lighthouse and Fort
Perch Rock, New
Brighton (in c 1900)
now Grade II* listed*



getting more local history into the primary schools.

Over many years, this combination of architectural experience and historical understanding has led Joy to close personal involvement with conservation. She has served on all the influential architectural and heritage committees in Wirral, and her knowledge and judgement combined with tact and courtesy, has resulted in, to quote a referee, 'the conservation of local heritage and civic pride, while encouraging and ensuring sustained progress and confidence in the future'. She has campaigned for key buildings to be given listed status; has advised on developments influencing specific areas; and has provided input to large scale schemes for the regeneration of the New Brighton seafront. 'Her constructive approach to necessary change has meant that modernisation is achieved in an inclusive manner'.

Joy Hockey has been widely recognised, with an MBE in the 2019 New Year Honours list, a Conservation Award 2019, as a guest at Liverpool School of Architecture's Celebration of 'Women in Architecture', and we were delighted she was able to receive her BALH Award at Local History Day in June.

With thanks to Joy Hockey, Angela Adams, Howard Mortimer, Hugh Batterbury and Sue Chadwick (Secretary of Oldershaw Old Girls Association)

www.wallaseyhistoricalsociety.co.uk



Joy Hockey MBE

Historic England crowd-funding appeal



Historic England has launched a new crowd-funding appeal to raise funds towards the restoration of the Jubilee Coronet at Shrewsbury Flaxmill Maltings.

As the world's first iron-framed building in the world, the Main Mill is an extraordinary example of the nation's industrial heritage, embodying significant changes in factory design and structural engineering. The Main Mill was the first fireproof, multi-storey structure of its kind and is known as the grandparent of the modern day skyscraper.

Following its conversion from a flax mill to a maltings in 1897, a new timber hoist tower was added at its north end. The maltings owners crowned the tower with a magnificent cast iron coronet to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee and the structure latterly became known as the jubilee coronet. However, 122 years later, the coronet is in urgent need of repair.

Now, as part of the restoration of the Main Mill, Historic England plan to return the jubilee crown to its former glory. It will be removed to a specialist conservation workshop where it will be carefully surveyed and repaired, before being reassembled and reinstalled, taking pride of place in the Shrewsbury skyline.

They need to raise £26,000 to cover the cost of the coronet restoration and success will depend on how many people they can reach. If you would like to show your support either by pledging or sharing the appeal with your friends and family, please follow the link for more information:

www.crowdfunder.co.uk/crowningshrewsbury

Sensory local history

David Killingray

Never heard of it? If you have not thought of local history in this way, read on. You are surrounded by it, as were the past inhabitants of your locality where smell, sound, taste, and touch were ubiquitous. As an historian the sensory past has long interested me; 'sounds' and 'smells' have entries in David Killingray and Elizabeth Purves, *An Historical Dictionary of Sevenoaks* (2012).

All this was given fresh focus when I was invited to speak to a group of blind people on the local history of Sevenoaks. Short of time and with other demands pressing, my first inclination was to decline. But, I thought, no need to wrestle with the tyranny of technology and produce a power point presentation. Play it by ear seemed a good way to proceed, and this I did. Twelve people turned up, most visually impaired in one way and another. It was a convivial gathering in the community centre, round a table with cups of tea and home-made cakes, an ideal setting to talk about local history.

My hope was for an interchange of ideas. This was helped by the late arrival of a middle-aged man with his white stick who said he 'had walked down from the town'. That offered the opportunity to ask about his journey and it soon emerged that he was aware, as were most of the people in the room, that Sevenoaks was a hill town. This led on to a fascinating discussion in which I learned a great deal about how people without sight perceived the environment and the place in

which they lived. Listening, smelling, feeling, and even sensing was vital to their being. We recalled long-lost smells, sounds and tastes from the war years, from school days, visits to hospitals and crowded places, all of which encroached on their present day lives. My participants in this fascinating engagement of ideas possessed an acuity of smell which was beyond my own experience. They could smell the gas works and the brewery from a distance that outpaced my abilities. The growth of traffic noise had altered their ability to distinguish sounds, and the prospect of silent electric cars posed a threat to their future safety.

The visually impaired invariably make judgements from a different perspective compared with those who can see. Recently I went to a book launch of Lucy Bland's skilful and sympathetic study *Britain's 'Brown Babies': The stories of children born to black GI's and white women in the Second World War* (Manchester University Press, 2019). The room was crowded, many of the people present being the subjects of her book, elderly survivors with childhood memories of racial discrimination and official disdain. For many of these innocent children, institutional homes and schools became places of abusive relationships as fellow inmates and pupils singled them out on account of their colour.

Unsurprisingly at the book launch there was anger and tears, plus some joy at moments of kindness and love. I learned much from the man sitting next to me who spoke of his childhood experiences of being passed from one institution to another. It was a very moving occasion. The encounter provoked thought. How would the blind people at the meeting a few weeks earlier have responded to a black British child or adult?

(left) women sorting coke at Sevenoaks gas works, c 1900, from *Sevenoaks: an Historical Dictionary*, mentioned above, available as a free pdf download from



www.sevenoakshistory.org.uk

BALH's new website - a time for change

Paul A Carter

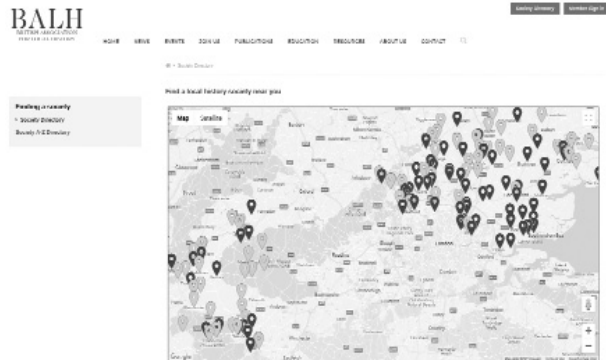
Some significant changes are coming to our online presence as our new website will be launching soon. It's a fact of Internet life that websites do age and while our current site has served us well over recent years technical limitations prevent us from being able to do all the things we want to support our members and attract new ones.

A key objective therefore is ensuring the new website solves these technical issues but, even more, is flexible enough to adapt and able to grow as the Association's needs evolve in the near future. However, that's just the foundation and what we are working towards is having an online presence which better reflects BALH today and where we stand within the local history world. Indeed, we plan to be more 'relevant' and a way of achieving that is having more local history content on the website, making it more of a 'go to' resource than we've been able to in the past.

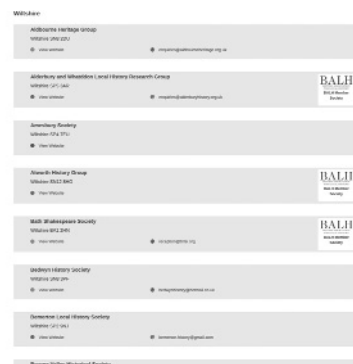
Of course, our members are key to BALH as the Association is nothing without them and we're forever striving to support the different categories of members and their needs, and this extends to what we can offer via the website. As well as continuing to provide our extensive library of publications, with The Amateur/Local Historian issues back to 1954, we are busy compiling a national directory of local history societies and organisations, with the aim of having the most comprehensive resource for anyone looking for local history help in a certain area. This is no small task but we're lucky to have some people within the Association to pull this information together.

It's important to us to broaden the scope of this directory beyond member societies although we hope more societies will see the benefit in joining BALH! However, we want to offer more to those societies who are members and help promote their work in local history.

The new website will be offering enhanced directory listings to member societies, not only to tell us more about what they offer but also to give a platform to publicise their events. That in turn helps BALH in our objective of making the website more relevant for local history as a whole; the societies' events can be shared there which means the website



(above) The local history directory, work in progress, in map form
and (below)
in a listing form





The website is designed to be highly visual, with plenty of images to support the content, as shown here with the new-style home page. See it in colour on our back cover.

has more local history-related content. In practice, member societies will simply have a few additional options in the new members' area to maintain this content, (simple guidance will be provided on how to do this).

While on the subject of the members' area, the old website predates our relationship with administrative partners Kingston Smith and this has always limited what we would like to do manage membership accounts as seamlessly as possible. Up to now there's been quite a lot of manual intervention to set up new memberships or monitor renewals, as we've had to hold this information in two places. So, we're working closely with the Kingston Smith technical team to ensure the new website speaks automatically to their membership system. While this helps streamline our administrative tasks, the biggest benefit is to the members, who will be able to manage their membership data directly and new members will be able to access our content much sooner than they can today. At the time of writing this is all work in progress and in fact our membership system is being upgraded to support the latest technology we are deploying in the website.

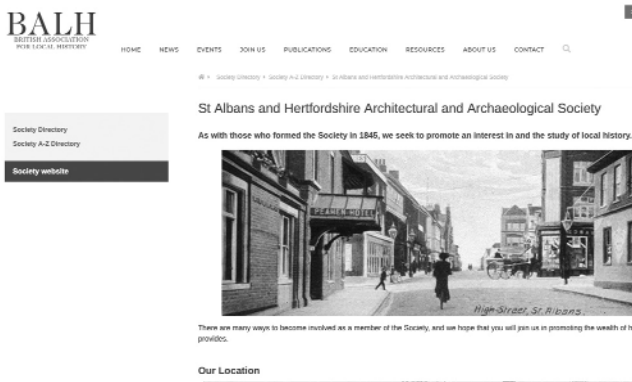
You will no doubt have already seen from this publication that we've taken the opportunity

to update our branding. Having a simpler logo on a clean background not only looks fresher but is also more flexible to use across our various media. Naturally the new website reflects this look and uses a lot of white space to, in design-speak, allow the content to 'breathe'.

The final key objective of the website is to be a far better sales tool for BALH than we have currently, to help us promote our work and encourage more members to join us. For example, one that's close to my heart as a genealogist, we're working hard to raise awareness of the relevance of local history among the burgeoning family history world, and content will be on the website to help put this message across in the same way we do at genealogy shows. Likewise, for academia, and perhaps most important of all, the younger market at graduate, student and school level. Technically, the new website will allow us to be more active on social media which helps to promote us further. As part of the technical upgrades, the website will work fully on all mobile devices, as well as desktop computers, a fact which is key to attracting a younger audience.

In summary, this is a huge project, not only for the technical development and the integration with Kingston Smith but also the migration of all our fabulous local history content. But it will all be worth it as I hope you'll agree when you see the new website. Personally, I just look forward to that time when the BALH trustees ask me whether we can add a new feature to the website, I'll be able to say 'yes we can!'

www.balh.org.uk



Member societies are given more opportunity to promote themselves, another benefit of being part of BALH

South Gloucestershire in the First World War project

South Gloucestershire Council organised a project last year on the county in WW1. It was part HLF funded, so there was a professional evaluation after the event by an independent consultant. The report is at <http://www.southgloucs.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/museums-and-galleries/ww1-museums-and-galleries/south-gloucestershire-and-the-first-world-war-2/> The executive summary lists some interesting and encouraging facts and figures.

Avon Local History & Archaeology's May 2019 monthly e-update contains a summary of the findings and a comment piece written by William Evans of ALHA which we reproduce here with permission.

The evaluation by Lori Streich of consultants Rowan Associates is titled *From Sleepy Villages to Industrial Hubs: Engaging South Gloucestershire with the First World War Centenary*. Findings include:

A. Three travelling exhibition displayed at 37 venues visited by 1,186,458 people; 4,000 post-cards distributed to promote awareness of the project; 4,000 bookmarks with recommended reading lists distributed, promoting books on the First World War available in South Gloucestershire Libraries; 729 books on the recommended reading lists loaned; 21,525 page views of the project's web pages; a micro-site created for South Gloucestershire's war memorials, which attracted 46,773 total page views; QR Codes on individual war memorials scanned at least 400 times to November 2018; A real-time "Twitter play" to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of the Somme produced, which over 91 days had 288 regular followers, produced 446 tweets and achieved over 150,000 impressions.

B. Schools and students: 3,914 pupils engaged through the delivery of workshops, training and access to learning materials about the First World War; training workshops in 21 schools (3 Secondary, 18 Primary); 50 teachers trained to use the learning resources produced by the project; by July 2018, approx. 3,000 children had engaged with the Poppy Gardens Project; 7 themed learning packs were produced and will be available after the end of the project as downloads or through South Gloucestershire's

Library Service; the learning materials were used by a range of family and community groups including Scouts, Boys' Brigade, and South Gloucestershire Museums.

C. Museums in South Gloucestershire: Resources, such as the exhibition materials, were left with local museums, and a programme of volunteer training was developed: 10 volunteers received training in different elements of the project, including using resources and researching war memorials; 32 volunteers attended social media training; 7 local museums reported that they had gained new volunteers through their involvement with the project. Volunteers contributed f 316 days' time to the project, equating to £47,709 of value.

Commentary by William Evans

The consultants' evaluation of the South Gloucestershire in WW1 is worth noting from several points of view. Some will be fascinated by how the English language is developing in the dialects of consultancy, local government, non-governmental organisations and the now specialist discourse of the heritage industry.

Others will question why professional evaluation (which costs money) is needed. Many of us dabble in, read, listen to or sleep through local history and archaeology just because we are interested, to satisfy curiosity, because we find them less irritating than television or professional sport, or because they are a harmless means of occupying time between retirement and death. We do not expect to evaluate or justify what we do, except in terms of personal satisfaction, though there are also strong arguments for recognising how information about the past feeds into education, mutual understanding, community cohesion, politics and general social well-being.

That is no answer to those who want to know why they should put their money, or other people's money for the allocation of which they are responsible, into local history projects or institutions. It is not unreasonable for donors to a charity to ask for evidence of how their gift has been spent. It is not unreasonable for taxpayers, local authorities or government

departments to ask for evidence of how public money has been put to use. It is not unreasonable for the Heritage Lottery Fund to ask to see what practical results its grants have produced.

We can get some idea of where money has gone from the accounts and annual reports of charities and public bodies. But they record inputs, not outputs, so they do not often tell us what the beneficiaries have received. For many years Bristol Polytechnic careers service measured its activity by how many careers guidance interviews its advisers gave to students; not until about 1990 did it try to find out how many students it had got into work within a year of leaving.

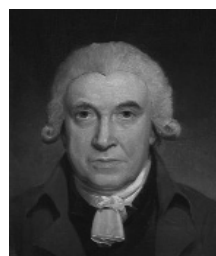
One criticism of evaluation is that it encourages box-ticking or, in the case of museums, libraries and other cultural operations, concentrates on footfall or bums on seats, which are easier to measure (in numbers, that is)

than cultural or educational outcomes, some of which are bound to be subjective. Measurement is not the same as evaluation. But these simple measures can be useful proxy indicators. Joe Bloggs will get more benefit from a museum if he actually visits it, in much the same way as you increase your chances of winning a lottery prize if you buy a ticket. Obviously care needs to be taken in collecting data: in the 1970s a local count produced surprising figures when members waiting for an adjacent youth club to open jumped up and down for half an hour on the rubber tubes across the road.

The evaluation of the South Gloucestershire in WW1 project shows how a local history initiative can be imaginatively devised, planned, managed and implemented. It shows the enormous interest people have in our past. It shows how local history can be used by teachers in schools. Over a million visits: our elected representatives should take note.

James Watt 1736 - 1819

James Watt's scientific and technical skill had a huge impact on our modern world, both directly and indirectly. He died on 25 August 1819, so 2019 is the bicentenary year of his death. A major exhibition in the Library of Birmingham will explore his life and achievements, while a wide range of events will take place through the year. For further information go to www.jameswatt2019.org/



Local Population Studies Conference

Paths to Marriage Courtship in England and Wales, c.1700-c.1945

Saturday 26th October 2019
The Mawby Pavilion, Rewley House, Oxford

The Local Population Studies Society is devoted to the promotion of the study of historical demography, and associated topics in economic and social history, in local and regional contexts.

Join us at our Autumn conference where our speakers will present a variety of papers on the marriage and courtship in England and Wales from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. Topics include regional courtship practices, romance, inter-racial marriage and migration for marriage.

To see a full list of speakers and to book a place please visit our conference page
<http://www.localpopulationstudies.org.uk/confer.htm>

Conference fee, including refreshments, is £30 for LPSS members, £50 for non-members (which includes one year's free online subscription to the LPSS Journal via IngentaConnect), and £20 for registered students*

*A limited number of student bursaries, to cover conference costs and reasonable travel expenses, will be met from the May Pickles Fund. Please contact us at conferences@localpopulationstudies.org.uk for more information

Closing date for bookings 14 October 2019

A chat with Robert Fyson

Stephen Roberts

Bob Fyson is a local historian whose work has focused on the Potteries and the Isle of Man. Stephen Roberts asked him about his approach to local history and his publications.

You have written extensively about working people in the Potteries in the nineteenth century. Why, as a teacher in higher education, did you choose to write about local history rather than national history?

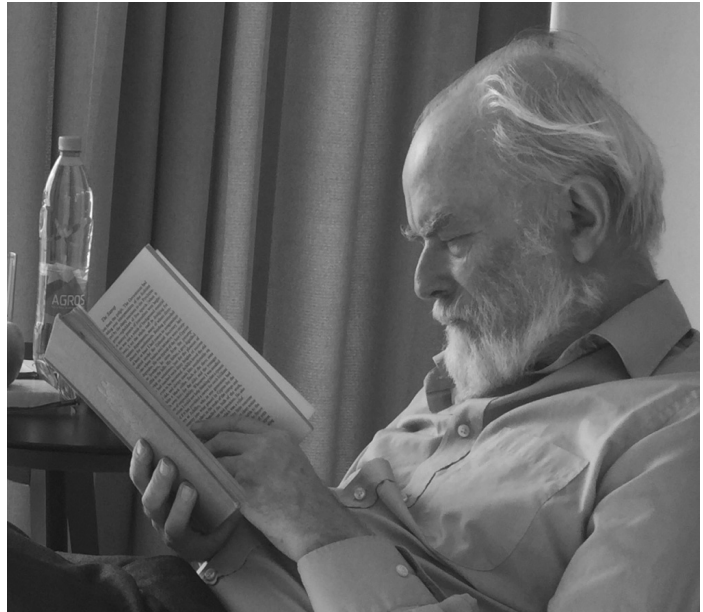
I taught Liberal Studies and then History at what was then North Staffordshire Polytechnic (now Staffordshire University), but my interest in historical research began when I undertook an MA in Modern Social History at Lancaster University in 1974. This entailed writing a dissertation and Harold Perkin was keen for us to research local elites. However, I wanted to write about Chartism in the Potteries and he was OK with that. I had attended a WEA day school led by George Patterson in 1968 - that momentous year - and that helped me see that Chartism was a substantial field of study. My colleague Owen Ashton also encouraged me to write about the Chartists, which led to writing my PhD thesis on 'Chartism in North Staffordshire.' I am pre-eminently a local historian. It seemed natural to write about the area where you live. You are close to the sources.

Who influenced the direction you took?

A local historian I greatly admired was J D Marshall, who was one of the lecturers on the MA course. He wrote about Cumbria and Lancashire and had been a member of the famous Communist Party Historians' Group. He was a delightful man and very learned. He was in tune with the nitty-gritty approach that

local history entails, as was his younger colleague John Walton, then just starting his academic career - Harold Perkin was more interested in a broad interpretative approach. Dorothy Thompson had her finger on the pulse of Chartist studies - she knew everyone working in the field. I attended two weekend seminars held at the house she lived in with her husband Edward near Worcester and out of that came an essay on the strikes of 1842 in the Potteries (*The Chartist Experience*, 1982). I suppose that essay launched me - as far as I was launched - as a local historian of Chartism. I then went on to tell the stories of a stalwart of Potteries Chartism called John Richards (*The Duty of Discontent*, 1995) and a Chartist transported on perjured evidence called William Ellis (*The Chartist Legacy*, 1999).

You have been involved in local politics yourself. Do you see a link between your own political activities and the Chartists of the Potteries?



In the 1970s I was a Liberal councillor and parliamentary candidate in Newcastle-under-Lyme (twice coming third). In 2001 I stood as an independent parliamentary candidate. I was very active in CND for many years. I agree with Dorothy Thompson that it is difficult to understand Chartism unless you have experience of being in a political movement. It's about optimism and commitment and collective action in support of your principles.

What sources have you used in your work?

In the Public Record Office (now The National Archives) I discovered a collection of hundreds of letters confiscated from Thomas Cooper at the time of his arrest in 1842. It's a major source - I don't think there's anything else like it. Actually I don't think it has been fully exploited. Other than that local newspapers have been my bread and butter. And Chartist journals - I think the *English Chartist Circular*, for example, deserves the attention of local historians of the movement. As well as the *Northern Star*, of course. And the Home Office papers in the National Archives.

How have you shared your findings with local people?

I produced a booklet of source material on Potteries Chartism for use in Staffordshire schools. I have given many talks, especially to WEA groups, local history societies, sixth formers and the much-missed Wedgwood Memorial College, Barlaston. I am currently writing an account of the tumultuous events of 1842 for a local readership. It will be published by the Stoke-on-Trent Trades Council.

You have now re-invented yourself as an historian of the Isle of Man. How has that come about?

As I said earlier, you are drawn to the history of the area where you live - and the Isle of Man is where I now live. I have had two books published by Culture Vannin. The first is *The Anglo Manxman* (2009), which is a biography of A.W. Moore, who was Speaker of the House of Keys and the author of a two-volume history of the Isle of Man. I drew on his diaries, which nobody had used before. The second was *The Struggle for Manx Democracy* (2016), which looks at developments between roughly 1830 and 1900. It reprints in full the prison diary of James Brown - an interesting radical but not, as has been said, a Chartist. I have also contributed several articles to *Proceedings of the Isle of Man Natural History and Antiquarian Society*. The editor of that for ten years was my partner Valerie Cottle. It is now called *Isle of Man Studies*. I am now in my eightieth year, but still keeping relatively busy!

The Birmingham Lost Children Project

Lauren Novelli

Did you know that between 1873 and 1948, over 6,000 destitute children as young as two years old were sent from the Birmingham Children's Emigration Home to live with farmers in the backwoods of Canada?

The Lost Children Project, by the **Balsall Heath Local History Society** is dedicated to telling the story of the Middlemore Homes, as they were known, while exploring many individual stories of British Home Children from the local area. The project is over a year in the making and is funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

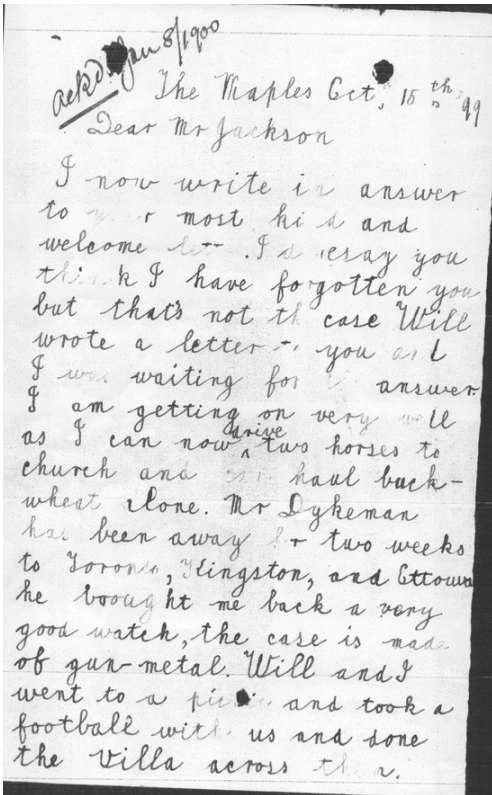
Sir John Middlemore wrote at the time that he was walking down the street in Birmingham and came across a homeless child. He was so shocked that he took the child home (much to the horror of his servants!). From this moment, it became his mission to give children in poverty another chance at life and the Middlemore Homes were established. Initially based on St Luke's Road, Highgate they were later transferred to a larger building on Weoley Park Road in Selly Oak.

Following *The Lost Children* press launch last year, we have been contacted by many members of the local community keen to trace their family history. In some cases, descendants of British Home Children have been connected for the first time! The focus on individual stories is extremely important to the project. One such local story is that of Alfred and Oscar Holland from Balsall Heath.

Before emigrating to Canada, the boys lived in a 'squalid and wretched' home. Their father was a drunkard who would go off for months at a time, leaving his wife alone with six children. When she could no longer afford to pay the rent or feed her family, she sent the boys to the Middlemore Home, in the hope of giving them a better chance of life. A year later, on June 1, 1899, they were sent to Canada aged 13 and 11.

Alfred and Oscar were taken from a life of extreme poverty and hardship to being treated like family in their comfortable new lives. Alfred was adopted by the Dykeman family, Oscar by the Blaney's and reports stated they were very happy. Although it is not known whether the two brothers ever reunited, they stayed in Canada for the remainder of their lives.

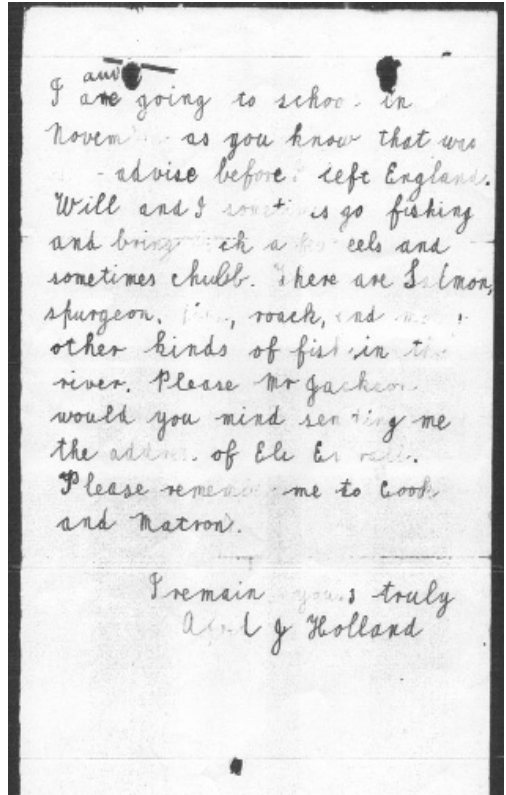
Here is a heart-warming letter written to Mr Jackson from Alfred dated October 15, 1899. It shows he is content with life, has made friends and is treated like one of the family.



Oct 15 1899
The Maples Oct 15th 99
Dear Mr Jackson
I now write in answer to your most kind and welcome letter. I do pray you think I have forgotten you but that's not the case Will wrote a letter - you ask I was waiting for an answer. I am getting on very well as I can now ^{drive} two horses to church and haul buck-wheat alone. Mr Dykeman has been away for two weeks to Toronto, Kingston, and Ottawa he brought me back a very good watch, the case is made of gun-metal. Will and I went to a picnic and took a football with us and done the Villa across the river.

containing pop-up theatre, singing and more. And on Saturday 21st at 2.00 pm Patricia Skidmore, daughter of child migrant Marjorie Arnison, will be flying from Canada to give a talk about her family's extraordinary experience.

The Lost Children Exhibition is funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and runs daily from 10am to 4pm and is free of charge. Do not miss this unique opportunity to discover more about this amazing aspect of Birmingham's heritage.



I am going to school in November as you know that we advise before left England. Will and I sometimes go fishing and bring back a few eels and sometimes chubb. There are Salmon, spurgeon, trout, perch, and other kinds of fish in the river. Please Mr Jackson would you mind sending me the address of the B.L.C. office. Please remember me to Cook and Matron.
I remain yours truly
Alfred J Holland

This is the story of just two of 6,000 children sent to Canada through Middlemore Homes. The stories of the children are massively varied; there are tales of great success but also those of great sadness.

We'll be telling many more of these children's fascinating stories at *The Lost Children* exhibition, at the Birmingham & Midland Institute from Saturday 14th to Sunday 22nd September 2019.

On Saturday 14 September at midday we'll also be presenting a 'Dramatic Lecture' performance in the Lyttleton Theatre at the BMI

For more information about The Lost Children Project, please contact Val on info@balsallheathhistory.co.uk or follow our Facebook page 'The Lost Children Project'.

[there is a transcription of the letter, if you need one, on page 19]

Modes of memorialising: from Balfour and the Great War to Trump and Brexit *a personal view*

John Bibby

History has impact, and historians have responsibilities to consider the impacts of what they say, write, and do. Centenaries and celebrations are particularly hazardous in this regard.

Two examples are discussed here: the Great War Memorialisations which have dominated recent UK popular history, and the 1917 Balfour Declaration which 'view(ed) with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people'.

Both these examples, it is argued, have validated narrow nationalistic arguments which ultimately impacted upon Brexit and Trumpism. More inclusive memorialisation of the Great War might have changed the outcome of the 2016 UK referendum and American election; more inclusive reportage of the Balfour Letter might have changed the subsequent history of Palestine and Israel.

The recent history 'boom'

The First World War has led to a booming of popular interest in history over the recent centenary years. The interaction between family history and local history has been particularly remarkable. Few towns or villages have been spared detailed investigations into local impact: Who went to war? Who was killed when and where? What about the 'Home Front' and the role of women?

These large national research investments have had their impact on the popular psyche – people are now far more historically conscious, particularly of centenaries, than they were ten years ago. But how sound is that consciousness, and how does affect what is happening *today*? ('History happens in the present but is written in the past'.)

Within the First World War, one particular event was the so-called 'Balfour Declaration' of November 1917. However, if 99% of the

British population have heard much in recent years about the Great War, the same 99% probably little or nothing about Balfour.

Even less well-known yet arguably more important than the Balfour Declaration was the Sykes-Picot Agreement of 1916. This carved up the post-war Middle East and has scarcely been noted in the centenary commemorations. The 'Borders and Beyond in the Middle East' (BABITME) conference in York in June 2016 may be cited as one honourable exception.¹ Papers at BABITME differed from most centenary commemorations in three distinctive ways:

- They emphasized that WW1 was a World War, not just a European war. 90% of UK commemorations have focussed on the Somme and the Western Front before the US was engaged; BABITME papers by contrast emphasised the African, Indian and Japanese theatres.

- BABITME papers focused on big issues which are still germane today: borders, migrants, refugees, religion, oil.

- BABITME emphasised how the Great War was above all a War of Imperialisms. Empires came and went as a result: Ottoman, Russian, German, Austro-Hungarian, British, Chinese and American empires were all massively changed.

How many British commemorations of WW1 even mention the above issues – imperialism, Africa or the Far East, and the role of civilians (except for British civilians, who after all were only tangentially impacted)?

By contrast – and I apologise if I tread on lots of toes here – the general UK consciousness of WW1 is repetitive, banal and nationalistic. The idea of a world view is notably absent. How has this happened?

It is unfortunate that WW1 centenaries coincided with the Brexit 'debates'. The centenary consciousness defined Europeans as enemies or wimps. In 2015-2016 these nations were again the enemy of Brexit. I conjecture that if the World War One commemorations had been more inclusive and less nationalistic, then the Brexit debates would have been different. (I accept that some professional historians have gone outside the mainstream and investigated world-themes, but these have been relatively slight in quantity and in impact. For every column-centimetre on WW1 foreign civilians, column-miles have been written on 'Our Brave Boys'.)

From Balfour to Brexit

The focus on 'banal, nationalistic' (including local) themes may also have confused the popular imagination regarding 'big' issues of World War One. In particular, different wars get mixed up. All we know is that Germany was the enemy and the French were wimps. 'Was Dunkirk before or after the Somme?' is a difficult question to answer, as are questions about the holocaust and the centenary. Both show a startling ignorance and a worrying lack of impact from the massive volume of work and resources that have been devoted to memorializing the Great War.

British war memorials reinforce the 'banal nationalism' of which I complain. I would welcome a serious international study on the discourse of war memorials and war remembering. In Slovenia I noted memorials that focussed on the political and worldwide impact of war rather than upon individual tragedies. The few German, French and Palestinian books that I have looked at on WW1 stress two things that British books omit:

1. There was 'another side' which also had its own legitimate interests
2. Most victims were not military (who are the only ones commemorated in the UK), but foreign civilians whose lives were upturned by invading armies of both sides.

The Balfour Letter is perhaps an extreme example. Calling it a 'Declaration' is part of a tendentious discourse which aggrandizes a brief personal letter from Arthur Balfour to Lord Rothschild. Subsequent UK discourse, especially since WW2, has tended to regard uncritically the letter as essentially a beneficent act to a persecuted people: see for example the triumphalist celebrations of November 2017² Most commentaries ignore:

- Opposition from Arabs already in Palestine, many of them Christians.

- Opposition from pre-Balfour Jews in Palestine and from British Jews who felt their UK identity would be threatened by a 'Jewish state' on disputed land.

- Britain's world-political need for Jewish support in 1917 – threats from Germany in the Middle East, the key role of the military chemist Chaim Weizmann, and American Jewry.

Following from the above it is but one step to the demonisation of Arabs and of Muslims which coloured the Brexit atmosphere of 2015-2016, filled as it was with images and fears of large refugee flows not unrelated to oil and imperialistic adventures both ancient and modern. There is thus a clear thread of misplaced history which leads 'From Balfour to Brexit', and historians have much to answer for!

Malevolent or Maleficent?

There are of course differences between benevolent and beneficent. The one implies deliberate intention; the other relates to impact rather than intent ('volent' = wishing; 'ficent' = doing). Similar differences may apply between malevolent and maleficent even if the latter word does not exist (except apparently as the title of a 2014 American dark fantasy film). What can be claimed about the impact of Balfour and Great War Memorialisation (GWM) if the arguments given above are credited with validity?

Here I draw a distinction between the two. Arguably the impact of GWM was merely maleficent – its bad impact was not intended. However, Balfour's Memorialisation has become so tightly integrated into national myth-making about the foundation of Israel that deliberate intent is evident. To develop this argument further would require a historical analysis of Balfour's memorialization – How was it reported at the time; How did the reportages develop as Middle Eastern political realities evolved? How do Palestinian and Israeli histories of Balfour differ? These questions underline the important impact which history and historians can have.

Notes

1 Statement of Interest: the author was involved in organizing this conference.

2 www.balfour100.org Verily, 'History is written by the Victors'.

News from the North-East

Win Stokes

As readers of my News from the NE slots will be aware much of the activity in the region in the last few years has emanated from projects largely financed by the Heritage Lottery Fund and backed by Groundwork NE and Cumbria. This continues. As the 'Land of Oak and Iron' project reaches its final phase a 'River Tees Rediscovered' project comes centre stage and another has recently acquired HLF funding 'Bright Water Landscape' focusing on the catchment area of the river Skerne north of Darlington.

Without being unduly cynical I think it would be fair to ask what these projects achieve in the long term in raising a wider public awareness of local history. There are presumably similar projects elsewhere in the country. How do they operate and what are their outcomes? I recently attended a meeting at which those involved in the 'Land of Oak and Iron' project raised the question of how to build on what had been achieved. Will the volunteers still volunteer if the task they signed up for is completed and the backup organisation no longer in place? Is this a matter of offering the heritage industry as part of a survival strategy to areas of economic deprivation.

Teesside may prove to be an interesting case for 'Tees Valley' has recently been created a unitary authority covering an area from Hartlepool to Redcar and from Piercebridge to the river mouth. It now has its own elected mayor and all sorts of promises of governmental support (a bit late for its steel industry). It also has a lively university and archaeological and local history societies, and the project has already published two original attractive guides to the geography and industrial history of the area. Does BALH have any thoughts on how to tap into the interest generated by these projects?

There are two developments in oral history, one based in Gateshead, the other at Newcastle University. Gateshead Central Library has long had a valuable Local History section built up by successive farsighted librarians. A major Heritage Lottery grant is now enabling this to be transformed into an accessible archive facility accompanied by activities to engage the local public. Under the

title the 'People's Archive' several projects are in the pipeline, the first, the 'Living Memory Project', involves collecting memories and information about life in Gateshead after the 2nd World War. In collaboration with the local branch of the WEA a Friends of Gateshead Archives group of volunteers (FOGA) will also participate in a programme to promote research into local history, and be offered the skills training to work with the archivists to help catalogue and digitise material.

Meanwhile at Newcastle University, following the appointment in 2017 of a new chair of Oral History, in 2018 an Oral History Unit and collective was launched which links staff researchers with community partners who bring their own projects to the unit. Deindustrialisation and its effects under the umbrella title of 'Work and After' has evoked several pilot studies one of them involving links with Northern Cultural Projects in an examination of the history of food banks which achieved national publicity, another on an experimental apprenticeship scheme during the 2nd world war is just nearing completion. Some of this activity is grant funded.

See also p 30

Transcription of letter on page 16

Dear Mr Jackson,

I now write in answer to your most kind and welcome letter. I dare say you think I have forgotten you but that's not the case. Will wrote a letter to you and I was waiting for an answer. I am getting on very well as I can now drive two horses to church and can haul back wheat alone. Mr Dykeman has been away for two weeks to Toronto, Islington and Ottawa. He brought me back a very good watch, the case is made of gun metal. Will and I went to a picnic and took a football with us and done the Villa across them.

I am going to school in November as you know that was advise before I left England. Will and I sometimes go fishing and bring back a few eels and sometimes chubb. There are salmon, spurgeon.....roach and most other kinds of fish in the river. Please Mr Jackson, would you mind sending me the address of.....

Please remember me to cook and matron.

I remain yours truly

Alfred Holland

BALH Awards 2019

FOR PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

- **Eric Apperley**, Cumbria: indefatigable contributor to the Cumbria County History Trust website
- **Neil Clarke**, Shropshire: a much respected local historian of the county for many years
- **Joy Hockey**, Wirral: lifelong research and celebration of the history of New Brighton and its area
- **Michael McGarvie**, Somerset: personal research combined with inspiring local community involvement
- **Rachel Radford**, Cambridgeshire: leadership of the far-reaching and inclusive Ickleton Society First World War project

FOR A SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

- **St Albans & Hertfordshire Architectural & Archaeological Society**

FOR RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION

The David Hey Memorial Article Award 2019

- **Roger Gilboy**, 'Crisis mortality in Civil War Oxford, 1642-1648', *Oxoniensia* vol.82 (2017) 83-104 [winner, long articles]
- **Adam Cartwright**, 'Mowbray and Co. Ltd., brewers of Grantham (1837-1952)', *Lincolnshire History & Archaeology* vol.49 (2014) 67-90 [published in 2017 despite apparent date]
- **Andrew Ford**, 'From beer to bombs: Wethered's Brewery, Marlow, during World War 1', *Records of Buckinghamshire* vol.57 (2017) 177-190
- **John Hardy**, 'Hidden lives: three Suffolk rectors who found time to read and write', *Suffolk Review* new series 70 (Spring 2018) 27-38
- **Paul Cleave**, 'Gooseberries for the Fleet: the Home Front kitchen in Devon in World War 1', *Devon Historian* vol.86 (2017) 93-106 [winner, short articles]
- **Pam Brooke**, 'Death on the Home Front', *Huddersfield Local History Society Journal* no.29 (2018-2019) 16-24
- **Martyn Everett**, 'Revolt in the fields: strike and lockout in South Cambridgeshire and North-west Essex in 1872-74', *Saffron Walden Historical Journal* no.34 (Autumn 2017) 2-6
- **Helena Millen**, 'William Cawley: son of Chichester and regicide', *West Sussex History* no.85 (Autumn 2017) 20-22

See Alan Crosby's article commenting on the Research & Publication awards on p 28 and the photograph on the back cover from Local History Day. Profiles of two Personal Achievement recipients appear on pages 5 and 7, and others will be in subsequent issues.

Local History Day 2019



A welcome at the Reception Desk from Maggie Escott and Virginia Bainbridge, with Alan Crosby on the left



Our venue, Conway Hall in Red Lion Square, London



Krista Cowman giving the morning presentation (far left), and (left) answering questions, with Claire Cross who chaired the session

lunch enjoyed in the room with book stalls and displays



Tim Lomas speaking at the AGM to introduce the idea of joint HA and BALH Teaching Fellowships



Rose Wallis giving the BALH Annual Lecture (right) and (below left) Rose talking to Gill Draper (centre) and Jane Howells

More photographs on the front and back covers

WITH THANKS TO PHOTOGRAPHERS PAUL A CARTER & JOHN CHANDLER



Closure of Kent History Federation

Susan Lavender

The last meeting of the Kent History Federation took place on 3rd June 2019 at Maidstone Library and Archive Centre. I have been attending the Federation's quarterly meetings for a number of years as a representative of BALH. The Federation has come to an end due to a lack of volunteers to sit on the committee or to undertake vacant positions on the executive committee which include, Chairman, Editor, Secretary, and Treasurer.

The Federation meetings provided a meeting place and platform for member local history societies to voice their concerns and publicise their news and events. Member societies' news, information, details of events and any articles of interest were also published in the Federation's twice yearly *Journal*. The Federation website and email addresses will still be available for the next 2 to 3 months. A vote of thanks was made to the executive committee and Mrs Jackie Grebby the Chairwoman and editor of the journal received the gift of a rose and chocolates for her work and contribution as editor and previously as secretary. After the meeting two presentations were given, the first by Dr Nick Hudd from the Tenterden Society on Horatia Nelson and the second by Dr Charles Turner of the Faversham Society on the Graveney Boat.

The Federation started life as The County Local History Committee on Tuesday, 4th April 1935 when the first meeting was held in the board room of the Royal Insurance Company, High Street, Maidstone. Allen Grove's account of its formation and history lists those present: the Chairwoman Dowager Lady Northbourne, Dr B R Billings of Folkestone, the Rev H D Dale of Hythe, Solicitor Walter Day, Arthur Golding the Curator of Maidstone Museum, Dr F W Hardman, Dr A G Little of the IHR, author and artist Donald Maxwell, Mayor of Deal W P D Stebbing, Charles Counce, Sir Reginald Tower and 'that mighty fighter for local history causes' Dr Gordon Ward. The secretary was Shoeten Sack. Apologies for absence included: Dr Irene Churchill of Lambeth Palace Library, Sir Charles Igglesden, the Right Reverend Bishop Welldon and Miss Anne Roper.

This meeting had been preceded by years of pioneering work by the then Kent Council of Social Service, previously the Community Council of Kent, whose annual meeting on 24th October 1933 held at Session House, Maidstone, was followed by a Conference on Village History chaired by the Dowager Lady Northbourne. Its purpose was 'to review what Kent and other counties have done in preparing village histories and to discuss future developments in the county'. The Standing Conference for Local History* (c/o the National Council of Social Service, 26 Bedford Square, London) was working towards the same aim.

The Minutes of the first meeting state that a report was presented about the circumstances leading to the Committee's formation, showing much preliminary work had been carried out. The report gave the names of individuals who consented to serve on the Committee and of societies which had agreed to appoint representatives. The list includes: Lord Conway of Allington, Frank Elliston-Erwood, Mrs Dorothy Gardiner, Geoffrey Hutchings, and the Reverend Canon Potts. Dr Gordon Ward represented the Kent Archaeological Society. A Local History Exhibition was proposed for inclusion in the 'Village Life' tent at the County Fair, and the sanction of KCSS to the formation of the County Local History Committee as a Committee of the Council had been given.

At the second meeting of the Committee, 30th May 1935, Lady Northbourne proposed Sir Anton Bertram should succeed her as chairman. At the third meeting on 5th November 1935 Gordon Ward became vice-chairman, and at the fourth meeting he was elected chairman



for three years. The Committee held exhibitions and winter lectures were given, and an information leaflet for the press and enquirers was suggested. There was also a panel of experts. At a meeting on 25th July 1939 Commander Frank Stagg RN became chairman and Miss Roper vice-chairman.

The Committee was then suspended because of the war, until 10th January 1947, when a meeting was held at Ashford Urban District Council chambers, with Commander Stagg as chairman. Allen Grove first attended a meeting on 9th April 1948 a few days after coming to Maidstone as Curator of the Museum. The County Local History Committee became the Kent History Federation in 1988.

The Journal of Kent History originated as *Cantium* in 1968, and was initially produced on a duplicating machine but had to cease after it began running at a loss. Pat Winzar, a previous secretary resurrected the magazine as the *Journal of Kent Local History* in 1975. This was also produced on a duplicator with the covers on thicker yellow paper. In the autumn it was printed on green paper and continued to be printed alternately on yellow and then green paper. The *Journal* was first printed professionally in 1988 on A3 paper, making the folded A4 magazine. In March 1991 the word 'local' was dropped from its name. In September 2004 the yellow and green covers were discarded when the UKC printing unit produced a single colour photo on the cover on white heavy weight paper. In 2006 Bison Print provided the cover with a full colour photograph which has been used since.

The One-Day Conferences have been an annual fixture on the Federation's calendar. These have been organised and held in May in each year by a different town/village history society in Kent with various speakers in the morning session on topics relevant to that place and date. Catering has been provided and for the afternoon, a choice of excursions and guided tours were provided. These have always been interesting and well organised.

The meetings have taken place in Maidstone, Ashford, Folkestone and then back in Maidstone at County Hall, with the last two meetings held at the Kent History and Archive Centre. Throughout its existence the Federation has actively and successfully provided a link between amateur and professional historians, local societies and county organisations.

* predecessor of BALH, via the Blake Report of 1979 (see *TLH* Vol 37 No 1)



This year is the 25th anniversary of **Heritage Open Days**, 13 – 22 September 2019. Many local societies are involved with opening special places in their area. If you are looking for somewhere to visit, search here by postcode. <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk/visiting>

If there is a member local history society that has been involved with other organisations in applying for funding from **Historic England** for **Heritage Action Zones** – to 'Breathe New Life into an Old Place' – and would like to write about their experience for *LHN* please get in touch. <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/>

The Jennens Cup is awarded by the **Solihull Local History Circle** at its AGM in May to the member who had made the greatest contribution over the past year to research or promote local history. This year the award went to Trevor England who is an expert on 15th-17th century wooden framed buildings. He has researched such buildings in Warwickshire over many years, and has given well illustrated talks on their construction. The photo here is of Pinfold Farm in Solihull. The Local History Circle is a member of The Solihull Society of Arts which was founded in 1944. Part of its 75th Anniversary celebrations is a three month exhibition of its work in the local library, starting on 1 July, which was suggested by the Circle who will provide many of the exhibits. <http://www.solihullarts.co.uk/local-history/>



Lambeth Heritage Festival will again take place throughout September, throughout Lambeth. Last year's festival had over 90 events to choose from: talks, walks, tours, exhibitions and more. We expect no less this year. The festival brochure will be available to download from www.llhf.org.uk from the end of July. As part of the festival, the **Lambeth Local History Fair** will be held on Saturday, 7th September 2019 in the Tate Library Brixton, Brixton Oval, London SW2 1JQ. The borough's societies, museums, archives and libraries will set out their stalls and sell their publications, and there will be a programme of talks and local walks throughout the day. www.lambethlocalhistoryforum.org.uk

On 5 October, the **Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology** will be holding its Industrial Heritage Day on 'Melting & Smelting' at the British Steel Conference Centre, Scunthorpe. <http://www.slha.org.uk/events/#October2019>

Edmonton Hundred Historical Society's annual Day Conference on 26th October is about 'Entertainment in the Edmonton Hundred' and features talks and audio-visual presentations on The Intimate Theatre, stars of the Victorian and Edwardian Music Hall, the films (1895-1908) of R W Paul, and how television took events such as the Coronation live into people's homes for the first time. info@edmontonhundred.org.uk

The annual Black Country History Day will take place on Saturday 9 November at the University of Birmingham, organised by the **Black Country Society** and the **Centre for West Midlands History** at the university. There is an exciting programme reflecting current developments in the area's history. <https://www.blackcountysociety.com/copy-of-black-country-annual-histor>



The **Wallingford Historical & Archaeological Society** (TWHAS) has been awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for 'engaging the community with local history through research, archaeology, publications and its museum'. <http://www.twhas.org.uk/>

The **Borough of Twickenham Local History Society** continues to collect awards. Not only did they receive the BALH Award for a Society Newsletter in 2017, in 2016, 2017 and again in 2018 they won the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society (LAMAS) publications award. The most recent one was for 'Images of Hampton in the 1920s and 1930s: the Roads, Buildings, Businesses and Shops, the River and Recreation' by John Sheaf, and Christopher French's paper on 'The Italian Murder' was Highly Commended. www.botlhs.co.uk

19 July 1919 was officially declared 'Peace Day' and its centenary is being marked around the country. An article in *Fram*, the Journal of the **Framlingham & District Local History & Preservation Society** describes what happened in the years immediately following the end of the war in their area. www.framlinghamarchive.org.uk



Horley Local History Society Newsletter describes the carnival there: 'The procession (below) started at the Munitions Store near the site of Fairfield Avenue and wound its way through the town to Mr Apps' Field off the Brighton Road, where a great tea party was held for 3000 men, women and children. This was followed by a programme of sports and entertainments and a good time was had by all'. www.horleyhistory.org.uk



Troon @ Ayrshire Family History Society is celebrating 30 years since it was formed, and in their *Journal* of Spring 2019 they look back on a time when they began as a small group of almost all local people. Research was slow and expensive, very few people had computers, and very little information was available online. So much has changed! www.troonayrshirefhs.org.uk

Abbots Langley Local History Society also have an anniversary as it is 25 years since they began when a group of four friends took the initiative. They were supported by their Parish Council who were keen that a society should exist by 1994, to celebrate the centenary of the council formed in 1894. The local WEA branch held a course on finding and interpreting archive material in the winter of 1993-4, and, as in so many other places, this also provided a spur. The President's article about their history in their current *Journal* is called 'And the rest, as they say, is ...'. www.alhs.org.uk

On that subject of parish councils, **Keyworth & District Local History Society** and the local **Conservation Area Advisory Group** have planned an event for 23 November called 'Celebrating Democracy: 125 years of Parish Councils', and they want to attract as many groups as possible who play a part in the life of the community. www.keyworthhistory.org.uk

In **The Project Purley Journal** there is running a series of articles on Purley Parish Council. What might at first sight appear a dry subject, and local council minutes can indeed sometimes be a tedious source to explore, their responsibilities had huge impact on the lives of their local community so they are well worth investigating. Bus services, meals-on-wheels, housing, footpaths, street names – still issues that cause debate and controversy. www.project-purley.net

Ashford Archaeological and Historical Society held its annual study day at Willesborough Windmill on an extremely windy Saturday in March with the windmill creaking and shaking above. The three speakers had a range of topics based around the development of industry and applied industrial technology: Michael Gilbert on The Great Exhibition 1851 and later 19th century celebrations, and the 1951 Festival of Britain; Rob Poole about all aspects of Essex Thameside railways; and Tom Burnham, an ex-employee of Blue Circle Cement, on the Kent Cement Industry and its Railways. Thanks to Marion Pont and Lindsay Pearson everyone had an interesting and enjoyable time. <http://ashfordarchhist.org/>



God's House Tower (below) is a new arts and heritage venue for the south coast, opening in September. The tower was initially built to form the southeastern cornerstone of the medieval defensive walls of Southampton. Now a Grade 1 listed monument it has had many uses in its 700 year history, including being the home of Southampton's Museum of Archaeology from 1961 to 2011, and has recently been subject of a £3.1m refurbishment project. There will be a permanent exhibition of the Tower's history, two new art galleries, an event space and other facilities. <http://aspacearts.org.uk/gods-house-tower>

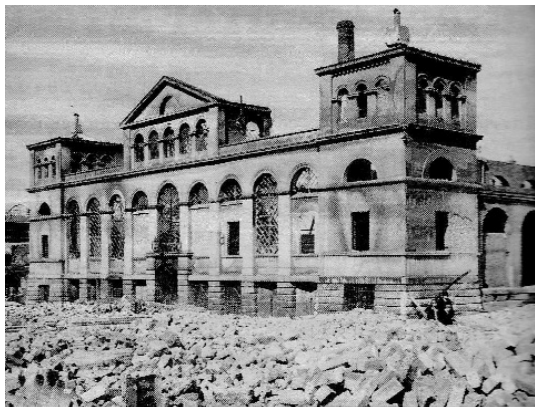


geograph© Copyright Alexander P Kapp and licensed for reuse under creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0

At the **Imperial War Museum**, London, a season of exhibitions, and other events, entitled 'Culture Under Attack' will run until January 2020. 'What Remains' is an exhibition curated in partnership with Historic England that explores why cultural heritage is attacked during conflicts, and the ways we save, protect and restore what is damaged. It includes the work of Margaret Tomlinson, the first female photographer appointed to the newly formed National Buildings Record in 1941. This was in

reaction to the destruction of historic city centres adjacent to factories and ports targeted in Nazi air raids.

<https://www.iwm.org.uk/events/what-remains>



The Lower Market in Exeter, photographed by Margaret Tomlinson in 1942. Historic England, from the i newspaper report of the exhibition

St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff, was announced as the Art Fund Museum of the Year 2019 at the beginning of July. Stephen Deuchar, Art Fund director and chair of the judges, said: 'St Fagans lives, breathes and embodies the culture and identity of Wales. A monument to modern museum democracy, it has been transformed through a major development project involving the direct participation of hundreds of thousands of visitors and volunteers, putting the arts of making and building into fresh contexts – social and political, historic and contemporary. This magical place was made by the people of Wales for people everywhere, and stands as one of the most welcoming and engaging museums anywhere in the UK'. <https://museum.wales/stfagans/>

It is sad to report that the **Yorkshire Waterways Museum** has had to close due to financial difficulties. This popular museum, guardian of local industrial heritage, and part of The Sobriety Project, a valuable learning resource for vulnerable people, will be much missed.

[hashthttps://www.waterwaysmuseum.org.uk/](https://www.waterwaysmuseum.org.uk/)

Seven museums in Cornwall are participating in the Citizen Curators programme, part of **Cornwall Museums Partnership's** move to diversify staff in Cornwall's museums, and to create new routes into the profession. In addition there are 20 new jobs, 5 apprenticeships and 5 internships. There is a video on YouTube called Pathways to the Profession www.cornwallmuseumspartnership.org.uk www.aim-museums.co.uk



Bedfordshire Archives & Records Service is running a series of exhibitions under the banner headline of 'War and Peace'. The next two will be 'War and Peace: Luton Peace Riot (July to October 2019) then 'War and Peace: War Returns' (October 2019 to January 2020). <http://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/ArchiveEvents/EventsExhibitionsandTalks.aspx>

The young amongst our readers may not be familiar with index cards (though drawers of them still exist in at least one record office I can think of), but for those of us who began their local history research in the pre-computer era they were a vital piece of equipment. There is a fascinating article by Simon Fowler in the May 2019 issue of *Magna*, the magazine of the **Friends of the National Archives**, exploring the history of the card index, though its starting point is unknown. Amongst the examples discussed is their use by the War Office, and the Red Cross, for keeping track of individual personnel. www.ftna.org.uk



Card index boxes at the International Committee of the Red Cross in Geneva, British Red Cross Society Archives

In case anyone missed the announcement earlier this year, **The National Archives** has said that Findmypast, in association with the Office for National Statistics, will digitise and publish the 1921 census online, in January 2022. The census was taken on 19 June 1921, and the original household returns contain information on nearly 38 million individuals. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/about/news/contract-awarded-to-publish-the-1921-census-online/>

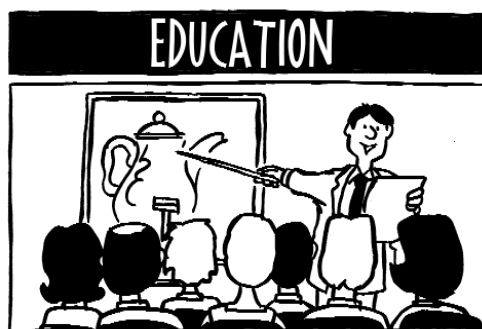


At the **National Library of Wales**, 2019 is the year of Discovery. In the Autumn there will be three specific campaigns aimed at helping people discover more from the Library's collections. 7 – 12 October is Libraries Week. This year the emphasis is on celebrating the role of libraries in the digital world. 'Focus on Photography' will explore the extensive photographic collections, between 14 October and 8 November. And thirdly 'Explore Your Archive' will take place from 23 November to 1 December. www.library.wales

In the **Weston Library of the Bodleian** in Oxford a new exhibition 'Talking Maps' will run from 5 July 2019 to 8 March 2020. It will 'celebrate maps and the stories they tell about the places they show and the people that make and use them'. There will be iconic treasures from the Bodleian's collection of more than 1.5 million maps, with exciting new works on loan and specially commissioned.
<https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/whatson/whats-on/current-exhibitions>

Permissions and fees can present a worrying problem for anyone wanting to publish local history material. The following item has been taken (with thanks) from 'Clish Clash' the e-newsletter of the **Scottish Local History Forum** www.slhf.org

The **National Library of Scotland** has changed its policy on reproduction permissions and fees. For re-use of many items in the collection, a Creative Commons licence will apply by default ('CC-BY re-use policy'), which means that, for example, reproduction in non-commercial publications such as Scottish Local History, and display in powerpoint presentations will be possible without any formalities or fee, just with an acknowledgement: 'Reproduced by permission of the National Library of Scotland'. There are, however, some exceptions for which acknowledgements are different, or permission must still be sought, such as manuscripts still in copyright, moving picture images, and material owned by third parties displayed on the NLS website (for example estate plans from other collections).



Keeping an eye on new short courses, study days and similar events can be time-consuming. Both **Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education** and **Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge** have well established programmes for certificates, diplomas, and degrees (see *LHN* 127 and 128 for personal accounts from two students*). Just a couple of examples of relevant forthcoming short courses at Oxford are 'What is Local History?' over six meetings in September, and a weekend in November on 'Family, Kin and Community: Reconstitution Techniques for Local Historians', and there are many more.
<https://www.conted.ox.ac.uk/search>

There are **FutureLearn** online courses in a myriad of subjects. They are featured in the current newsletter from **Council for British Archaeology**, with examples from the University of Reading 'Archaeology: From Dig to Lab and beyond'; University of York 'Exploring Stone Age Archaeology: The Mysteries of Starr Carr'; Newcastle University 'Hadrian's Wall: Life on the Roman Frontier', and University of Leicester 'England in the time of Richard III'. www.futurelearn.com/courses/ www.archaeologyUK.org

**The next in this occasional series will be from someone who has been studying online with the University of Strathclyde. If any reader who has done a different course would like to contribute, please do get in touch. editor.lhn@balh.org.uk*

If in doubt, contact the Library:
enquiries@nls.uk.
<https://www.nls.uk/using-the-library/copying-services/permission>
<https://maps.nls.uk/copyright.html>
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

BALH Awards for Research & Publication 2019

Alan Crosby

Each year BALH gives awards for research and publications. The winners are from a shortlist of articles, drawn from all journals and transactions volumes sent to the Reviews Editor during the previous twelve months. The assessors look for clear and fluent writing, which is accessible but not over-simplistic; an imaginative approach to the subject, including innovative topics or new perspectives on familiar themes; accuracy in technical matters such as referencing; and the potential for an article to act as a model or an inspiration for others who might consider researching the theme. We disregard the production quality of the journals, because some societies are well-resourced and can afford a high professional standard while others have limited funds and have to take a more modest route.

The winners are felt by the Reviews Editor and the assessors to be exemplary and to represent the best of 'local' local history publishing from across the UK. We feel that this excellent work deserves wider publicity and so we republish the two winning articles (one long, one short) in a subsequent issue of *The Local Historian*. The catchment is several hundred articles but we know that there are many journals which we don't receive - if your society publishes a journal but does not send it to our Reviews Editor, why not do so in the future?

The overall winner of the 'long articles' category this year was Roger Gilboy, whose **'Crisis mortality in Civil War Oxford, 1642-1648'** was published in *Oxoniensia*, the annual volume of the Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society. It is tremendously impressive, analysing death rates in the city of Oxford during the first Civil War (1642-1646) using data from eight sets of parish registers. It sets this in context by considering the socio-economic geography of the city, and its physical and environmental character, highlighting factors such as the spread of disease via roaming armies, the gross increase in overcrowding, the breakdown of scavenging, and the presence of the king which rendered the Corporation powerless. This is a major contribution to the 'home front' history of the Civil Wars.

Adam Cartwright's **'Mowbray and Co. Ltd., brewers of Grantham (1837-1952)'** appeared in *Lincolnshire History & Archaeology*. This was the sort of medium-sized locally-based industrial enterprise which was ubiquitous in Britain until the mergers, agglomerations and closures of the post-Second World War period. The paper looks at the company's management and administration, its commercial strategies including the expansion of tied house and pub purchases, licensing procedures, its financial structure, diversification, the impact of two world wars, and the final sale of the business. It is a model of a company history in an increasingly impressive county journal.

'From beer to bombs: Wethered's Brewery, Marlow, during World War 1' was produced by a team of researchers and authors under the leadership of Andy Ford and published in *Records of Buckinghamshire*. This article is based on the large archive of Wethered's brewery, held at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies in Aylesbury.

John Hardy's **'Hidden lives: three Suffolk rectors who found time to read and write'**, published in the *Suffolk Review* (Spring 2018), has intriguing perspectives upon the Victorian Church of England, looking at donnish clergymen in rural Suffolk parishes where, as John wryly notes, the incumbent 'displayed a talent for study, church work and community involvement, in that order one suspects'. This article had exemplary referencing - 62 footnotes for only 8 pages of text!

The overall winner of the 'short article' category was Paul Cleave, whose **'Gooseberries for the Fleet: the Home Front kitchen in Devon in World War 1'** appeared in the *Devon Historian* (2017) as part of a special themed issue, 'Oats, sprats and barley bread: feeding Devon in World War 1'. It began by looking at wartime cookery books (a theme much more familiar from World War 2) and then covers the role of wild food, the importance of local newspapers and especially parish magazines, and references to Devon from national sources. This was accessible and wide-ranging

local history with a good use of contextual material to draw the broader picture.

Another Great War article, one which told a tragic tale, was Pam Brooke's '**Death on the Home Front**' (*Huddersfield Local History Society Journal* 2018-2019). Uniquely, I think, this tells of the consequences of a decision by a military tribunal. Charles Shaw, aged 28, an only son who worked with his father, James, 62, as a blacksmith and hill farmer, had his application for exemption rejected. James sent his son to collect the appeal papers, then hanged Charles's mother and himself from the banisters of their house. Charles was sent to train at Cannock Chase and there, in April 1917, took his own life. This is a beautifully written essay with a heartbreaking story, set in the bureaucratic and community context of the times.

Martyn Everett, in '**Revolt in the fields: strike and lockout in South Cambridgeshire and North-west Essex in 1872-74**' (*Saffron Walden Historical Journal* Autumn 2017) investigated the formation of the Agricultural Labourers Union in the region in 1872, reminding us of rural radicalism, a subject much researched in the 1960s and 1970s but now rarely noticed. The paper charts its local spread using the evidence of newspaper reports drawn from Cambridgeshire, Essex and more widely.

Other, but very different, radical discontent was covered by Helena Millen's '**William Cawley: son of Chichester and regicide**' (*West Sussex History* Autumn 2017), a very short article-only three pages but with 29 footnotes-recounting the career of William Cawley, scion of a prosperous brewing and property-owning family of Chichester, who became MP for Midhurst in 1640. He was radicalised, siding with the political republicans, and in 1649 was one of seven Sussex men judging the king, and one of 59 signatories to the death warrant. In 1651-1652 he was a member of the Council of State, but in 1660 fled to Switzerland where he died in 1666. This is a succinct account of how the very local experience can be linked to dramatic national events.

See page 20 for the full list of BALH Awards 2019

century group photograph of all Kent's MPs, and comments in pencil on documents passing between Lloyd George and Churchill in late July 1914, showing a reluctance to declare war on Germany - as occurred the following week. Thence happily downwards to end an excellent tour.

[Currently tours for groups of 6-10 can be booked through Parliamentary Archives archives@parliament.uk & Eventbrite]

Visiting the (Westminster) Parliamentary Archives

Maggie Escott

On Friday 31 May, the eve of Local History Day, ten BALH members - the maximum permitted - assembled in Black Rod's garden to pass through security and embark on a group visit to the UK Parliament Parliamentary Archives.

From here, with our guide Annie Pinder and support staff, we ascended the purpose built archive repository, Victoria Tower, in small groups, meeting on 4 of the 12 storeys to learn about some of Parliament's many treasures. In the centre of the tower a balcony adjacent to the original cast-iron circular staircase affords a brilliant vantage point over the entrance serving Royal Carriages on state occasions. Here we could see the intricate neo-gothic stonework and metalwork supporting the Tower, which was completed to architect Sir Charles Barry's design in 1860.

Our next stop was a fireproof and humidity controlled strong room where all original Acts of Parliament are stored as parchment rolls. We were shown the materials used to create them, and also the 'Hansard' records and Journals of the House of Lords and House of Commons for each parliamentary session - an excellent starting point for monitoring the progress of failed, amended and enacted local legislation.

On to the upper storey exhibition room, with its views over London and current restoration work in Parliament, for a most informative talk and question and answer session. We saw items from the archives ranging from a 15th century royal charter, to the deed recording the naturalization as a British subject of the composer Handel, maps of canals and railways, family legislation and litigation, a 19th

continued in column left



books .. from different points of the compass

A Visit to the Seaside

Colin Ryder

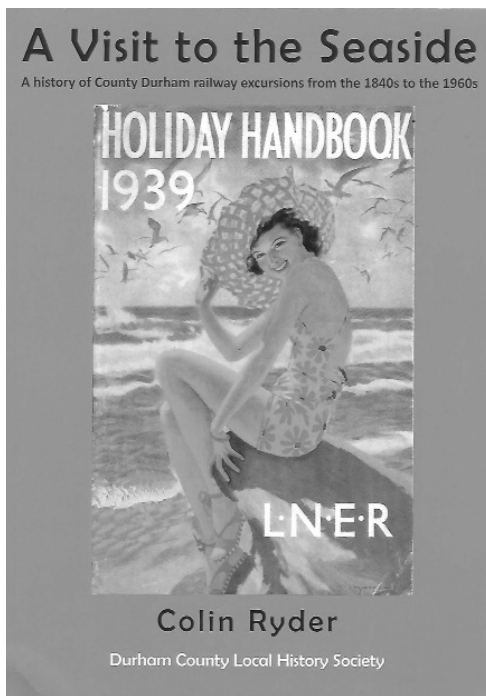
2019 £15 www.durhamweb.org.uk/dclhs

You could be forgiven at first glance for mistaking this for a current holiday handbook particularly with LNER emblazoned on it, but look a little more closely and the date of the picture is 1939 and the subtitle of the book 'A History of County Durham Railway excursions from the 1840s to the 1960s'.

This is the latest publication from the **Durham County Local History Society** an organisation of which I am proud to be the chair. I am also proud of this latest publication although I had nothing to do with its production. That was the work of the author and our society secretary John Banham. They have produced a very readable, well researched and impeccably documented piece of local social history.

As a result of the rapid development of the railways, by the mid 19th century County Durham had become the centre of a mining and manufacturing region whose workforce used the facilities provided by locomotive hauled transport not only for work and commerce but also for leisure activities. The first identifiable special provision for a particular group of travellers in the North East dates from April 1840 when the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway Company made special arrangements for members of Mechanics Institutes visiting a Polytechnic exhibition in Newcastle, but probably more typical was the provision that same year for a Gateshead clergyman to take the staff and students of his school down to Tynemouth on Saturdays at a reduced rate; the health giving properties of sea air being already well established.

'Gladstone's Railway Act' of 1844, aimed at making railed transport available to the 'poorer class of travellers at moderate fares and in carriages protected from the weather' ushered in the era dominated by amalgamations and takeovers that ten years later brought into being the North Eastern Railway whose empire even at this early date stretched from south Yorkshire to the Scottish border. This meant that travellers did not have to juggle with tickets issued by different companies to go any distance. The company quickly appreciated the potential for diversifying its servic-



es that this could offer. Yet despite the Gladstone Act's reference to 'the poorer class of travellers', at this date the company's advertising and tourist guides were aimed at people like the members of the Mechanics Institutes seeking information about the countryside they were traversing rather than just a trip to the coast. Leisure or what one advert calls 'pleasure' excursions came with the advent of national Bank Holidays in 1871 and it was after this date that seaside towns and villages began to cultivate amenities to attract those lower down the social scale seeking fresh air and entertainment away from the work place and daily routine.

The book is divided into three time periods 1840-1922, 1923-1947, 1948-1960 and offers fascinating insights into the changing leisure preferences of the different periods. There is plenty here of facts and figures for the serious railway buff but the real interest is the light shone into a little studied aspect of North East social history. As I said although I had nothing to do with its production I am very proud of it and happy to announce its appearance. See page 19 for more News from the North East.

Win Stokes

Dr Mary Elizabeth 'Eppynt' Phillips 1874-1956

A pioneering woman from Brecon

edited by Hilary Williams for the Breconshire Local & Family History Society

available from Mrs Williams at 39 Camden Rd, Brecon LD3 7RT £7.50 incl postage, cheques to BLFHS. www.blfhs.co.uk

This small but powerful book tells the story of one woman whose life covered significant elements of the way women's position in society changed in the course of the early decades of the twentieth century. Within its pages we discover the history of education, medicine and health services, gender, suffrage, regional differences and more.

Mary Phillips was the first female doctor to qualify from a Welsh University when she graduated in preclinical studies in 1898 from Cardiff Medical School at what was then the University College of South Wales and Monmouthshire. Mary moved to the London School of Medicine for Women (Royal Free Hospital) where she qualified as a Doctor of Medicine in 1900.

Equipped with letters of recommendation from both institutions she began the difficult task, for a woman, of finding employment. Her first position was as a locum in Nottingham under Dr Sarah Gray who also supplied a glowing reference. In 1904 Dr Phillips as elected to the fellowship of the British Gynaecological Society and shortly after became a member of staff at the newly opened Leeds Maternity Hospital. In the sum-

mer of 1909 she was a temporary medical Inspector of Schools in Leeds, and subsequently was involved with a number of voluntary organisations there concerned with the health of women and children.

Dr Phillips was an active member of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, and wrote to the *Yorkshire Post* in March 1912 to dissociate herself from the activities of Miss Mary Phillips, a supporter of the militant WSPU.

During the First World War she worked with the Scottish Women's Hospital for Foreign Service in France and Serbia and this experience is covered in fascinating detail. Invalided home to Leeds in October 1915 Dr Phillips then undertook an extensive fund-raising lecture tour.

Post war she 'gave her services to the poor of Merthyr Tydfil' for 10 years before again travelling - to Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia and Palestine. Towards the end of her life she lived in London and in Deal, Kent, continuing to give lectures to raise money for the cause so close to her heart. Throughout she kept diaries and detailed notes, which have formed the main sources for this book.



2020 BALH AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS: Personal Achievement

Local historians who have made significant voluntary contributions to the subject are publicly honoured by the BALH Awards for Personal Achievement.

The purpose of these awards is to identify and publicise good practice in a wide variety of forms. Anyone not professionally engaged in the subject is eligible. We want to hear about work being carried out by people throughout the country who have gone beyond the everyday, reached further than their own immediate vicinity, continued for many years, encouraged others to become involved, and thus caused interest and enthusiasm to spread. They are essential to the vitality of local history today. The Trustees may make up to six awards annually, and may in addition offer 'commended' certificates.

Nominations must be made on the form available in the July issue of *Local History News* (in the Supplement pages 3-4) and on our website at www.balh.org.uk/awards. Please do not send any additional material.

See inside front cover for further details of our other awards

Bedford History Timeline

Alan Crawley and Bob Ricketts CBE

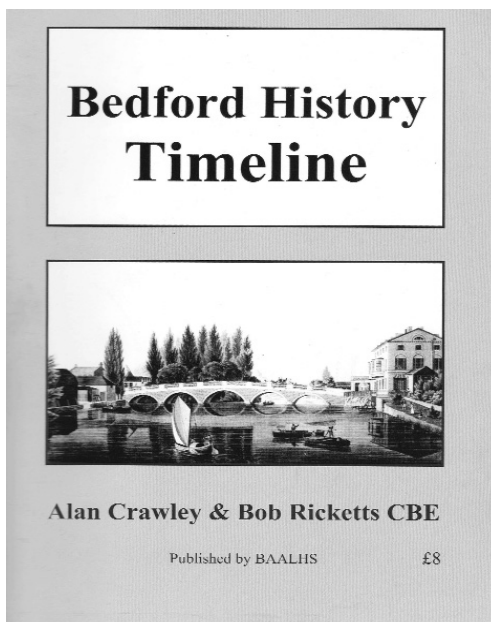
Published by Bedford Architectural, Archaeological and Local History Society 2019

ISBN 978 1 9160708 0 6 £8 + £2 postage from the Society's Hon Editor at 68 Mendip Cres, Bedford MK41 9EP cheques to BAALHS www.baalhs.org.uk

This book has the laudable objective of making the town's history 'easily accessible'. It is indeed readable, comprehensive and simple to navigate – hooray for the index! 'A reliable chronological account of important events' is presented in bite-sized pieces, inevitably some in more detail than others. In almost all cases they are accompanied by clear and helpful illustrations, usually on the facing page. These include maps, old and new photographs of the town, drawings, prints and pictures of relevant artefacts – such as a coin of King Offa, and a £5 note from Barnard's Bank. Some examples are shown below.

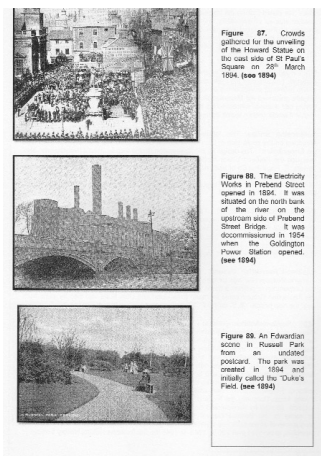
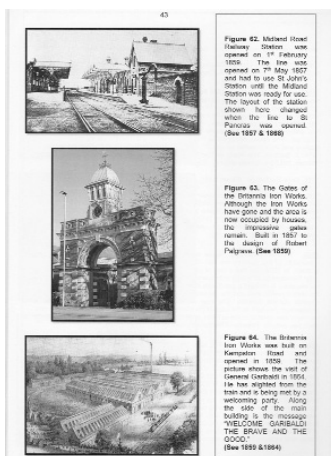
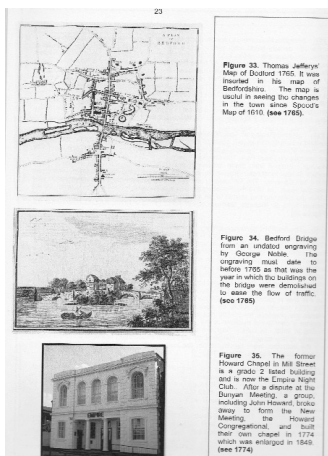
Spanning the period from the 6th to the mid-20th centuries in 87 pages is a challenge which the authors tackle with confidence and precision. The problem of some events and buildings lacking a clear starting date is solved by providing separate sections on 'Origins' and 'Early Churches'.

Importantly, each entry is given a source reference to other published work to allow readers to take their interest further. These are supplemented by an extensive bibliography. Not long ago *Local History News* was criticised by a reader saying we should not assume everyone knows what VCH stands for (though of course



local historians do!) so I pass that on for an addition to the list of abbreviations in this book. It is perhaps nit-picking to mention typos, especially relating to punctuation, and the absence of italics for book and journal titles – is the latter is going out of fashion?

Bedford's rich history comes over clearly, allowing the reader to follow the chronology systematically or to dip in to specific time periods or to use the index to look up, say, schools or hospitals. This is a good value addition to the bookshelf, and well worth seeing as an example, if another society is thinking of a similar project. *JH*



Characters from placenames

Alan Crosby

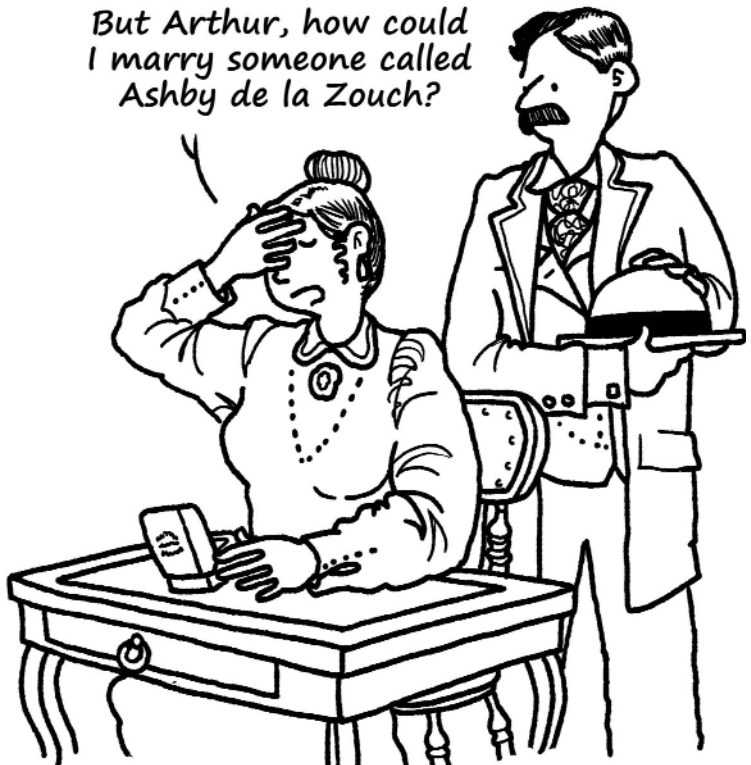
When driving along the back roads and country lanes of England I sometimes compose in my mind the list of characters in a work of fiction that I might one day write, imagining their names and identities though I have yet to work out any plot, setting or dramatic denouement. The inspiration comes from the names on signposts, and I know that that there are other people who share the same flights of fancy.

My favourite potential character in the unwritten masterpiece is a dowdy spinster, of the sort who might have stepped from the pages of an early Agatha Christie novel. She's called Mavis Enderby, which is the name of a tiny village in the Lincolnshire Wolds and to me is just perfect for a middle-aged lady in the 1930s, with wispy hair, a faded expression, and a sagging tweed skirt.

Others have been there before me. In *The Meaning of Liff* (1983), Douglas Adams used place-names for spoof definitions: 'a dictionary of things there aren't words for yet'. Among them was my friend Mavis Enderby, which Adams defined as a term for 'The almost-completely-forgotten girl-friend from your distant past for whom your wife has a completely irrational jealousy and hatred'. A story often repeated about poor Mavis is that allegedly there was once a signpost for the village and its near neighbour, which pointed 'To Old Bolingbroke and Mavis Enderby'. A local humourist is said to have added, below those words, 'the gift of a son'.

Sad drab Mavis Enderby is just one of a large cast of Lincolnshire characters in my putative novel. There's a feisty young lady (if it's set in the 1920s she'll probably be a flapper with a heart of gold) called Cherry Willingham. The sinister old miser who lives in the mysterious house set behind a high brick wall is Carlton Scroop, but he has a cheerful fresh-faced nephew called Boothby Pagnell who might fall for Cherry's charms . . . although Boothby has a rival in the shape of the local doctor, Burton Pedwardine. There's a foppish young man, perhaps a poet much given to over-long hair and velvet collars, called Donington Eaudyke, and the butler at the big house is known simply as Pinchbeck (the footman is Whaplode).

*But Arthur, how could
I marry someone called
Ashby de la Zouch?*



Some real-life writers have taken the names of characters from an atlas, a road map or a personal visit. Georgette Heyer (1903-1974), best known for her romantic historical novels set in the Regency period, also wrote a dozen detective stories in the classic English style. For the *dramatis personae* of *Detection Unlimited* (1953) she raided the place-names of northern England.

The villain is Gavin Plennmeller (a hamlet beside the River South Tyne just opposite Haltwhistle) and the village busybody is Mrs Midgeholme (a tiny former mining community on the lonely road from Alston to Brampton in Cumbria). Inspector Harbottle hails from mid-Northumberland, although Heyer ventures over the border into Dumfriesshire for his colleague Sergeant Carsethorn. Mr Cliburn the vicar, Thaddeus Drybeck, Mr Ainstable (the Squire with a capital 'S') and Constable Melkinthorpe are all from near Penrith; Mrs Dearham, Mrs Dockray, the Lindales and the Patterdales are also Cumbrian; and the name of the victim (Sampson Warrenby) is that of a village near Redcar.

I haven't yet found out how Heyer researched and chose those names – did she, for example, use the gazetteer in an atlas, or was it from personal knowledge? Some of the places are so small that only a large-scale map would show them.

A little research might well reveal the answer (... yet another item on the long list of projects for the future ...) but I strongly approve of the way she employs locative surnames for her characters. Even the minor ones, the 'bit parts', have them – Knarsdale, Coupland, Eaglesfield, Newbiggin, Silloth, Warcop – again, some of them from the vicinity of Penrith. Scarcely anybody apart from Inspector Hemingway has any other type of surname. I sense an article developing here – something learned in a place-name journal. But then there's the great novel to write ... Mavis Enderby has a lot to answer for.

BALH Trustee profile

Having recently retired from a career in corporate media and public relations, I was honoured to be asked to be Treasurer of BALH as of 1 January 2019.

I graduated in history from Exeter University in 1980 but part of me always regretted not having done any postgraduate work. Becoming self employed in 2002 also gave the time to complete an MRes in Cultural History at Goldsmiths, University of London, which was most enjoyable, and I was able to take a PhD at Royal Holloway a few years later. My thesis was on Early Modern Bible Commentaries (an important source thus far completely overlooked by both historians and theologians) and I was very fortunate to have the outstanding Prof Justin Champion as my supervisor. During that time I wrote several articles and gave a number of academic papers and I was subsequently asked to become the Secretary of the Christianity & History Forum.

After that David Killingray encouraged me to become more active in writing articles on local history in general and the Sevenoaks area

(where I lived until very recently) in the long nineteenth century in particular. So far I have had articles published in peer-reviewed journals on the lengthy struggle to put in place the West Kent public drainage system; the personal and social dislocation resulting from the mismanagement and collapse of smaller local friendly societies; the reasons some Sevenoaks farmers in particular were targeted during the earliest stage of the 'Captain Swing' riots of 1830-31; and the idiosyncratic ways in which one local tenant farmer pursued his campaign, against leading members of the West Kent aristocracy, to end the Extraordinary Tithe in the 1880s.

One of the key factors linking this body of work is risk - who assumes it and why, and how and when those people might seek to transfer it onto other groups or individuals better able to bear it, either willingly or unwillingly. Risk is also the meta-theme of a new book on nineteenth century Sevenoaks David and I have just completed and which we hope to have published by the end of 2019.

I hope my business background will allow me to bring some additional commercial and marketing expertise to BALH in future.

Iain Taylor

Notes News Issues

A new logo for BALH

These are exciting times for the BALH. Activities are plentiful, membership is increasing, the Association's finances are strong, and the Trustees have a number of good new ideas, such as the Teaching Fellowships which were announced at the AGM on 1 June.

Also unveiled at the AGM was the smart, easy to navigate new BALH website (see p 10), and the Board decided to take the opportunity to develop a new logo to accompany it. This is now being rolled out across the BALH's literature and publications, including *TLH* and *LHN*, as you can see.

The old logo had had its day and looked very ancient. It was square, 'blocky' and harked back to a very distant past, probably the 1970s. By complete contrast the new logo has been professionally designed to have a much more modern feel to it. It seeks to position the BALH as an innovative, forward thinking organisation, responsive to its members and devoted to devising new and exciting ways of doing local history.

We hope you like it.

Iain Taylor

Local History Day 2020

Those of you who were at LHD 2019 will know that next year's major BALH event will take place on Saturday 6 June, at the Institute of Historical Research in London. Professor Andrew Hopper from Leicester University will give the annual lecture on 'The Human Costs of the British Civil Wars' (see www.civil-warpetitions.ac.uk); and the morning presentation will be made by Professor Catherine Clarke, of the Centre for the History of People, Place & Community at the IHR.

Further details will be in *LHN* and on our website as they become available, booking starts in January but please put the date in your diary.

Family Tree Live at Alexandra Palace

Continuing her campaign that local and family historians can and should work together, Gill Draper took the BALH bookstand to 'Family Tree Live!' in April (see below). She and Prof Geoff Timmins also gave talks; Gill's presentation can be seen on the BALH website under 'Education'. It was a very successful event for the Association, with 15 new individual members signing up, from across the country. This type of event allows us to meet like-minded people and provides plenty of networking opportunities, which we hope will bear fruit as continued contacts into the future.



BALH Officers and Committees

President: Professor Caroline Barron

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

Board of Trustees 2019-20:

Dr Virginia Bainbridge
Dr John Chandler
Professor Claire Cross
Dr Paul Dryburgh
Professor David Killingray (*Chair*)
Dr Tim Lomas
Dr Jessica Lutkin (*Vice Chair*)
Dr Jonathan Mackman
Ms Susan Moore
Dr Winifred Stokes
Dr Iain Taylor (*Treasurer*)
Professor Geoff Timmins

Advisory Committees:

Outreach : Ms S Moore (*Chair*), Dr V Bainbridge, Dr M Escott, Ms J Golding,
Mr C Haydon, Mr R Hunter, Dr A Jackson, Dr T Lomas, Dr J Lutkin, Dr J Mackman,
Dr J Mattingly, Prof E Royle, Dr I Taylor, Prof G Timmins

Mr P A Carter (Web Manager) *ex officio*, Dr G Draper (Events & Development Officer) *ex officio*

Publishing: Dr J Chandler (*Chair*), Prof M C Cross, Dr D Dixon, Dr P Dryburgh,
Ms J Fillmore, Dr M Forrest, Mr P Jackson, Dr M O'Sullivan, Ms J Owen,
Dr W Stokes, Dr K Thompson, Dr N Tringham, Dr M Winstanley

Dr A Crosby (Editor *The Local Historian*) *ex officio*
Dr J Howells (Editor *Local History News*) *ex officio*
Reviews Editor ex officio

Web Manager: Paul A Carter; **Editor, *The Local Historian*:** Dr Alan Crosby;
Editor, *Local History News*: Dr Jane Howells; **Reviews Editor:** vacancy;
Events & Development Officer: Dr Gill Draper

Membership and Financial Services: Kingston Smith Association Management

BALH

BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR LOCAL HISTORY

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

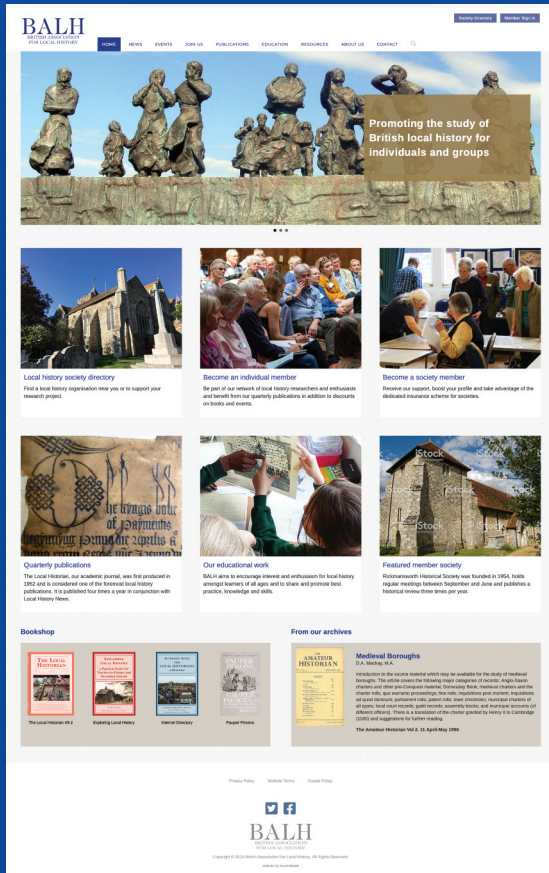
- serves as the national body representing local and regional historians
- hosts Local History Day, an annual event open to all, with discussions, presentation of awards, AGM, and a specially commissioned lecture based on current research
- publishes the prestigious quarterly journal *The Local Historian* 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**



*Carving of St Francis in Creevelea Friary
(see page 4) photo Alan Crosby*

*The home page of BALH's new website
(see page 10)*



*2019 BALH Local History Award recipients at Conway Hall on Local History Day
(see page 20) photo John Chandler*



Local History News

NUMBER 132 SUMMER 2019

www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

2019

24 August The London Family History Fair (Discover Your Ancestors), Sandown Park, Esher: BALH bookstand. <https://thefamilyhistoryshow.com/london/>

26 Sept Sevenoaks Historical Society: bookstand and talk by Gill Draper
<http://www.sevenoakshistory.org.uk/events.html>

27-28 Sept AGRA Conference (Oxford): bookstand and workshop by Susan Moore
<https://www.agra.org.uk/>

2 November West Surrey Family History Society Fair and Open Day (Woking)
bookstand and talk by Gill Draper
<http://www.wsfhs.co.uk/pages/openday.php>

2020

21 March BALH seminar 'Unexpected sources for local history'. Taunton.
Further details to follow

17-18 April Family Tree Live! Alexandra Palace, London

6 June London BALH Local History Day

Readers who would like to suggest relevant events at which BALH might be represented, by a display table, sales stall or perhaps a talk on the programme, are invited to get in touch with Dr Gill Draper, BALH Events & Development Officer, email development@balh.org.uk. Particularly welcome are proposals which include offers of local volunteers to help on the day. This is a very helpful way in which members can be actively involved in the work of BALH.

BALH
BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR LOCAL HISTORY

REVIEWS EDITOR

The British Association for Local History is looking for a Reviews Editor, to take up this position from the early Autumn of 2019

JOB DESCRIPTION

RESPONSIBILITIES

- To receive books and journals for listing in each quarterly issue of *The Local Historian*
- To list the publication details of each book and the contents of each journal, in accordance with the format currently in use
- When appropriate, to liaise with publishers to obtain review copies of books
- To commission reviews of books, post the books to reviewers (or arrange for them to be sent direct from the publisher), receive reviews and forward them to the editor of *The Local Historian* for inclusion in the journal or on the BALH website: this is a continuous process
- The Reviews Editor is **not** expected to compile the Reviews section of the journal or to decide which reviews will go on the website
- Subject to discussion with the journal editor, to produce an annual 'Reviews Editor's round-up' which briefly reviews a broad selection of books and smaller publications which have not been the subject of full reviews in the journal or on the website
- To shortlist articles for the annual BALH publication awards: this involves choosing eight longer articles and eight shorter articles drawn from all journals and bulletins received over a year (November to November); then sending the hard copy journals containing those articles to the editor of *The Local Historian* (who arranges the judging procedures and confirms the winning selection)
- Each year to choose a winner of the annual Newsletter award (for a local history society newsletter) and to liaise with the winning society
- To supply a short illustrated review for each quarterly issue of *Local History News*, dealing with a pictorial (or largely so) local history publication
- To produce a short written report for each meeting of the Publishing Committee (March and October), to attend its meetings, and to come to the BALH Local History Day in early June
- To liaise as required with the editors of *The Local Historian* and *Local History News*, and with the chair of the Publishing Committee

SKILLS, EXPERIENCE and KNOWLEDGE

- Excellent verbal and written communication skills
- Organising and planning skills
- Writing reviews of historical publications
- Willingness to liaise with publishers, review authors and editors
- Familiarity with the world of local history
- A broad working knowledge of potential reviewers from academic and non-academic backgrounds

FEE

A fee of £1333 (£1000 per annum) is offered for the period from the beginning of September 2019 to the end of December 2020, renewable from January 2021. The appointment is on the basis that the person selected will be a contracted freelance worker and will not be an employee of the British Association for Local History. Reasonable expenses (including travel where appropriate, and the cost of postage and packing) are payable.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications, together with a brief CV and contact details of two referees, should be submitted by email to: admin@balh.org.uk, no later than 31 August 2019.



AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS

NOMINATION FOR AN AWARD FOR PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT (SEE NOTES PAGE 31)

Nominations must be made by completing this form and sending it to the Awards Secretary (address below) by 1 January. Each year the winners will be invited to receive their certificates at Local History Day.

A. Person Nominated

Full name
Address
Email

B. Nomination made by

Name	
Address	
Telephone: Day	Evening
E-mail	
Appointment/position (if any)	BALH Member: Yes / No

Please also add the names, addresses, email and telephone numbers of two referees

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C. GDPR

Nominator: Under General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), I confirm my consent to BALH maintaining my details and contacting me by email, telephone or post, for the purpose of Awards administration and related matters.

SIGNED	DATE
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Please note the nominee and the referees will be asked for their signatures to this statement when they are contacted by the Awards Secretary

Send this form to: Awards Secretary, BALH, 7 St Mark's Road, Salisbury SP1 3AY

PTO

D. Short Citation

In no more than twenty words, please say why you think this nominee should receive an award:

E. Extended Citation

Please provide a longer piece of no more than two hundred words about the nominee; this will be used during the selection process: both citations may be published to promote good practice in local history.