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AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS

- *To encourage research and publication*
  One or more certificates may be awarded each year for a published article 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 Heather Falvey 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

The approach to 'Winterfell', with the curtain wall of the 17th century tower house on the left, and mock-medieval farm buildings ahead. See page 33. Photo Alan Crosby.

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 BALH Reviews Editor Dr Heather Falvey; if you have a newly published work, either as an individual or a society, please send a copy for listing and possible review to her at: 119 Winton Drive, Croxley Green, Rickmansworth WD3 3QS. Be sure to include all relevant details such as price and where to purchase.

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for all parts of the Association,
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A powerful aura of antiquity

Alan Crosby

Although travel was drastically curtailed in 2020, between lockdowns we spent a fortnight in County Down, going with two friends. It was my third visit in four years and, as many of us feel, there's something reassuring about returning in that way - no longer any pressure to read all the guidebooks, or find out where the supermarket is. But those places which were enjoyed or which impressed can be savoured again, perhaps in a new season or in different weather and light.



One such place for me is Nendrum, among Northern Ireland's most treasured historic sites but, like much else in the province, not well-known or much visited. It is one of the dozens of small islands in the western shallows of Strangford Lough, formed by the semi-submergence by the sea of a swarm of drumlins from the last glaciation. These islands, with their characteristic oval shape and rounded profile, like half a hard-boiled egg, are not far offshore and their combination of isolation, accessibility and basic defensibility was much valued in the medieval period. They are dotted with the remains of tiny churches, raths or ringworks, crosses, miniature castles and other monuments.

Nendrum is approached by a narrow road which 'island hops' along causeways and bridges. You drive almost five miles from the main Downpatrick road, eastwards until the tangled inlets of the lough are close by on both sides in a complicated interweaving of land, water and seaweedy flats. There's a sense of heading to nowhere in particular (although, prosaically, there is a posh golf club on the furthermost of the islands) but then you negotiate a double bend, cross a bridge over an inlet, pass a small ruined castle, and there's Nendrum. A low hummocky hill scattered with trees on its lower slopes rises on the right, circled with a rampart-like wall of large irregular grey-white boulders and in the spring carpeted with fragrant bluebells.

This is the location of one of Ireland's most ancient monastic settlements, a green hill far away which accommodated a sizeable community of monks between the 6th and 13th centuries. Its evocative remains have for me a powerful aura not only of antiquity but also of the sense of place and environmental awareness which determined the choice of site. There are three concentric ramparts, forming flattish terraces on which are the traces of circular huts, garden plots, and a schoolroom or scriptorium. On the summit are the ruins of a 10th century stone church, a contemporary sundial reconstructed from excavated fragments, and the stump of a tall detached round tower also of the 10th century, built in the Irish fashion and once 89 feet high.

And all around you is the intricate network of channels and inlets of the lough, the waters blue in the sunshine or whipped to grey froth in bad weather. Looking across the inlet on the eastern side at low tide there are visible two long lines of stones, one across the head of the water, the other parallel to the southern shore. These are - and this I find quite remarkable - the remains of the oldest tide-mills known anywhere in the world, dated to 619 and 786 respectively.

I've been there on a bright fresh day in May when all was blue and green and gold, fresh and clear and sparkling in the light. Then it was a joyous spot, and the lives of the monks in their individual huts, tending their garden plots in tune with nature, were maybe to be envied. And I've been there on a day when a freezing wind blew hard amid the ruins on the summit, driving the light drizzle into my face, and making me think with dismay of having to shelter in a drystone beehive hut in such weather. This year, with a warm breeze and the hill to ourselves, it was a chance to sit and contemplate on their often troubled lives - plagues, problems with Vikings, the steady campaign of attrition waged against the Celtic church - and also on our own.

(see also endpiece 2 on page 33 and front cover)



‘the relevance of locality’

Jane Howells

From time to time the title of these profiles comes from a comment made in one of the references we seek for each person nominated for a Personal Achievement Award. The phrase above could apply to many but it is interestingly pertinent when, at first glance, the work of the individual concerned appears to focus on something completely different.

Barry Jolly was born in Middlesex, and spent much of his working life in the North West. After reading History with Economics and French Studies, followed by an MA in Education, at Lancaster University, he worked in personnel management before a short service commission in the Royal Navy. Thereafter he was a lecturer, finally Curriculum Manager in Business and Management at Blackpool and The Fylde College.

His first local and family historical research arose from working for nearly a decade after retirement as a volunteer room steward for the National Trust at Sizergh Castle near Kendal. This property has been the family seat of the Strickland family since the mid-13th century. Barry researched and wrote more than a dozen articles on their history which not only expanded the family's knowledge but also enhanced the experience of visitors to the Castle.

Amongst the portraits at Sizergh are those of Captain John Whitby and Mrs Mary Anne Theresa Whitby, who make the link to Milford-on-Sea. They lived on the Newlands estate of Admiral Sir William Cornwallis, much of which was inherited on his death in 1819 by the then widowed Mrs Whitby. Barry wrote a monograph, *Mrs Whitby’s Locket*, which was published by the Milford-on-Sea Historical Record Society in 2011.

Shortly thereafter, Barry Jolly moved south to New Milton, Hampshire, the neighbouring parish to Milford. He joined the Milford-on-Sea Historical Record Society and has had a significant influence on the Society. As editor of its Occasional Magazine (now appearing regularly every two years) he has set demanding standards of scholarly rigour resulting in a 'massive' improvement in the quality of articles published.



Barry Jolly

His participation in their Research and Discussion Group has encouraged other members to research and publish new work on the area. He is also a committee member of the Local History Section of Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society, and of the Friends of Sir Harry (Admiral Sir Harry Neale of Walhampton).

Barry Jolly's own research interests and knowledge has continued to develop on local admirals important in British naval history. His expertise is widely known, and demonstrated by publications in international and national as well as regional and local journals. In the summer of 2019 he played a leading role in the activities marking the 200th anniversary of Admiral Cornwallis's death. There was a day of celebration on the village green involving local school children, and the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire.

At the same time a major and highly successful exhibition was hosted at the St Barbe Museum and Art Gallery in Lymington organised by the Museum, MOSHRS and the New Forest National Park Association: 'Command of the Seas: The Navy and the New Forest against Napoleon'. Barry was a member of the organising committee and crucially a key con-

tributor to the text-writing committee that provided the historical information for the exhibits. He also sourced items for loan from private lenders, from his wide contacts in naval history.

Barry Jolly has shown through publication, lectures, exhibitions and local events how national and local history come together. Naval historians and local residents alike are better informed as a result of his work.

With thanks to Barry Jolly, Christopher Hobby, Lynton Robbins and Joanna Close-Brooks



A stained glass window dedicated at All Saints Church, Milford-on-Sea in memory of the three admirals of Milford - Admiral Sir William Cornwallis, Admiral Robert Man and Rear Admiral John Peyton - at the time of the Cornwallis Bi-centenary in 2019. The window also features Captain John Whitby. It contains two lines from a poem written by Barry Jolly, 'Elegy for the Admirals of Milford' - With fame and honour and respect well blest, 'Midst Milford's lichen'd graves they now may rest. Photo: Paul French - Southpoint Films.

Mrs M A T Whitby illustrated on the back cover.

https://www.milfordhistory.org.uk/

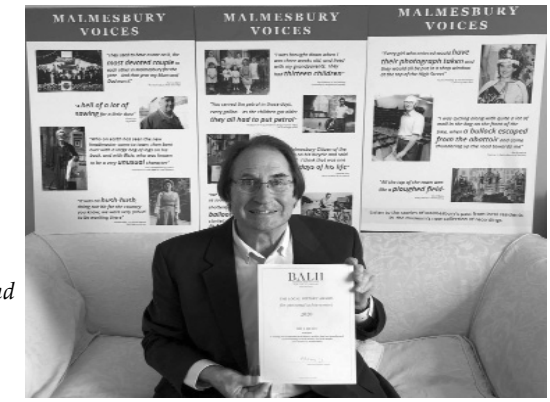
The power of voices

Jane Howells

Bill Reed spent his professional career in company language training, after taking an MA in Modern and Medieval Languages at Cambridge University and a Management Diploma with the Open Business School. While providing Business English training courses for the staff of major companies, he made many audio recordings of people talking about their work, and also made audio recordings for English teachers in French schools.

He has lived in Malmesbury, North Wiltshire, since 1984, and when he retired he was asked by the Athelstan Museum in the town to volunteer his skills and experience to create an oral history archive. 'Malmesbury Voices' began in 2015 and since then Bill has recorded some 250 local stories in local voices from Malmesbury and the surrounding villages. This has produced a hugely rich resource about social and economic life in the area during the 20th century, of exceptional quality due to Bill's sympathetic approach to contributors, engaging style as an interviewer, and his technical expertise.

The archive is widely shared through outreach events such as Bill's local talks, a series of programmes for BBC Radio Wiltshire and Malmesbury Community Radio, school education days and many articles in the community newspaper, *The Jackdaw*.



Right: Bill Reed with his BALH certificate and the Malmesbury Voices panels from the Athelstan Museum (photo Sharon Nolan)

Bill has written three books using these oral and other documentary resources. His interest in the industrial heritage of the town has resulted in histories of the Malmesbury companies EKCO and Linolite. Another spin-off is the story of the murder of Harry Neal, which places dramatic events in the context of Malmesbury life during the Second World War. He is currently working on the history of the telecommunications industry in Malmesbury.



Bill Reed recording an interview with Joan Bambury, at Westonbirt. Joan was talking about her experience working for the Air Ministry during WW2, in a payroll section which was evacuated from London to Westonbirt House, Gloucestershire. This meeting was facilitated by Westonbirt School, who now have a copy of the recording in their archive.

For the Museum, 'Malmesbury Voices' has unlocked recent history and given it a different flavour, enabling museum visitors to engage with the stories in an immediate way. Links with photographs and short films, and the use of tablet and handheld devices to communicate local history, has also inspired a redesign to make the most of the sound recordings. It will continue to be used for new activities in the future. Athelstan Museum is a charity run by volunteers so recognition and additional income from new projects such as this is important to their survival.



December 2019, launch of Linolite book, with contributors (L to R) Peter Beuttell (grandson of the founder of Linolite); Sarah Pettigrew; Barry Dent.
Photo by Sharon Nolan

The BALH Personal Achievement Award was presented virtually to Bill in June 2020; in November Bill Reed and the 'Malmesbury Voices' project were announced as the South West Regional winner of the Marsh Trust Awards for Volunteers in Museum Learning. This is organised by the British Museum and sponsored by the Marsh Christian Trust to recognise the work of volunteers in the Museum sector.

With thanks to Bill Reed, Tony McAleavy, Heather Perry and Deborah Clogg.

https://www.athelstanmuseum.org.uk

While out walking ... (3)



The delightful village of Blakeney in North Norfolk is a former fishing and commercial port which is now a focus of a tourist and holiday area. It has one of the highest rates of second-home ownership and holiday lets in the country, accounting for some 40% of its residential properties.

The trend whereby unmodernised cottages were being bought up as holiday accommodation goes back to before the war. In 1946, because of serious concerns about this, and the realisation that local people were being priced out of the market, the Blakeney Neighbourhood Housing Society was founded. It aimed to buy properties, renovate and modernise them, and let them to local families. From the start this was a pioneering exercise in sympathetic building restoration, far ahead of its time. The BNHS now owns 43 properties and is a powerful element in the continuing effort to keep Blakeney as a living community. In the early years one source of funds was donations placed in 'money boxes' let into the walls of cottages. Now, larger contributions are required!

Alan Crosby

Letchworth Settlement celebrates its centenary

Kate Thompson

The Letchworth Adult Educational Settlement, to give it its full title, held an inaugural public meeting on 8 May 1920. It was part of a wider movement intended to help working men and women who would otherwise have little or no access to education, and built on the earlier adult school movement, which began in the late 1790s and was a significant element in the provision of adult education in Britain.

The first reference to an adult school in Letchworth was in 1905, only two years after the town was created. In 1907, when the population of the town was about 4,000, meetings of the adult school were held at the Skittles Inn, Letchworth's famous 'pub with no beer'. They discussed various esoteric subjects, such as the 'Utopias of More and Morris', 'The Mind's Apprehension of Divinity', 'The Political Position of Women' and the 'Fallacy of Neo-Malthusianism'.

Letchworth Settlement started life in some rooms in the museum, but had to leave when a new library was planned. It had a temporary home for a while before buying the former Skittles Inn. It moved there in 1925 and is still its home today. The building is listed grade II. Over time additions have been built, notably a hall, named after William Wallace Kincaid, whose legacy provided the funds to build it, and additional lecture rooms.

Subscribers were invited to pay £5 towards the Settlement and many people signed up. The number of subscribers and students increased considerably in the first eight years. There were eight classes a week in the first year and this had increased to 29 in year 7. The number of students rose from 121 to 610 during this time and the number of subscribers from 81 to 260. A list of early subscribers includes such well-known names as two members of the Cadbury family and Seebohm Rowntree, as well as many local 'worthies'. Unlike many other settlements, Letchworth ran classes in local villages in north Hertfordshire and south Bedfordshire, until the shortage of petrol in the second world war meant they could no longer operate.

A six-month course originally cost 5/- and a three-month one half this amount. From its inception the Settlement was seen as a force for good and helped local people, such as during the General Strike when unemployed people could attend classes for free and also receive a free meal. Letchworth is one of the few settlements still in existence although its future was looking bleak earlier this year, until a fundraising campaign saved it for now. A centenary history, *Letchworth Settlement 1920-2020. A century of creative learning* was published by Hertfordshire Publications.



G B Shaw at a conference on rural education, April 1932

An introduction to the Norfolk Archives and Heritage Development Foundation

Luke Shackell

In recent years, local authority archives have been under increasing pressure to cut their budgets. Whilst never welcome, it has forced many archive services to fundamentally rethink the way in which the archives in their county are collected, preserved and made accessible.

In East Anglia, the Norfolk Record Office (NRO) has developed a set of long-term strategic goals to steer service development. One of these aims at providing a sustainable service. Initially the latter concentrated on reducing costs and energy consumption whilst increasing income generation: the NRO now generates about £250,000 per year to support its services. However, the NRO also needed to look at fundraising to support its own work and help meet another of its long-term goals: supporting the diverse work in community-based archives across the county.

In 2016 the Norfolk Archives and Heritage Development Foundation (NORAH) was established by the NRO as an independent, registered charity. NORAH's stated aim is the 'advancement of education for the public benefit in the history of Norfolk, by working in conjunction with the NRO and its partner organisations'. It is overseen by a board of trustees and administered by NRO staff.

The two main ways NORAH achieves its goal are, first, by funding the acquisition, preservation and processing of records and printed materials worthy of permanent retention. The second is by supporting projects and activities which engage different audiences with archives. It is funded by a supporter's scheme, donations, lecture programme and bequests as well as grant funding.

The largest example of document acquisition happened just after the formation of NORAH in August 2016. A local collector decided to sell his eclectic collection of archives and the Morningthorpe Manor House Sale was announced. An immediate response was needed to raise the funds necessary to purchase important records at the auction. With the help of large and small donations from individuals and organisations NORAH helped to raise £30,000. This enabled the NRO to purchase almost 90 lots to over the four days of the auction. A full list of the records purchased can be seen on the NRO website.

While the scale of the Morningthorpe acquisition is impressive, the majority of items NORAH helps purchase come up for sale online or in auctions individually or in small groups. The two most recent NORAH supported purchases, acquired during lockdown, are, firstly, a page of churchwarden's accounts from Dickleburgh dating from the 1540s. It contains information about rebuilding the church and sending local troops to fight in France in 1545 under the command of Sir Edmund Knyvett.

The other purchase was a series of deeds which include a, 'Confirmation by Will Sedman and Walter Eton to the Master of the hospital of St. Giles, Norwich, of land in Norfolk, 1st December 1411, 13th year of Henry IV'. This is particularly interesting because of its links to the Great Hospital in



Morningthorpe exhibition in Long Gallery.
Image credit Norfolk Record Office

Norwich. Formerly known as St Giles' Hospital, the Great Hospital continues to be a charitable, residential institution. Its archives, which are kept at the NRO, extend from the thirteenth century to the twentieth century and have been inscribed into the UNESCO UK memory of the world register.

NORAH has supported projects which use archives to improve people's wellbeing. During lockdown NORAH has granted funding towards the History Begins at Home project which aims to counter loneliness and promote wellbeing by getting friends and family to talk about history. They have an active social media presence and lots of prompt sheets and archival film on their website to help start the conversations. This is a national initiative of the Archives for Wellbeing Network and the Chief Archivists in Local Government Group in which the NRO is active.

NORAH has also provided a grant to the Change Minds: Dr Hills' Casebook project. This is a partnership between the NRO, the Restoration Trust and the OffShoot Theatre Company. It works with people who have mental health problems to improve their wellbeing through sustained interaction with the past. Each participant selects a patient from the records the Norfolk County Asylum and then learns the skills they need to research that person's life. This research then forms the basis of a commissioned stage play, with professional actors, which will tour the area in 2021.

Another group that NORAH has supported is the Norfolk Girl Guides. In March 2019 NORAH gave a grant to support internships at the Girl Guides' Archive Resource Centre. This enabled two students from the University of East Anglia to gain an insight into archive and museum processes whilst learning some basic conservation and cataloguing techniques and developing a knowledge of the history of Girlguiding Norfolk *(see image on back cover).*

The interns worked with the Girl Guides collections, which includes both records, such as logbooks, photographs, paperwork and books, along with physical objects such as uniforms, memorabilia and the all-important badges. They helped to catalogue records and create metadata to help make the records more accessible to the general public. To help aid the placement the interns received half a day of training, along with a tour, at the NRO covering document handling as well as packaging. The aim was for the interns to have another 500 items accessioned, catalogued or properly described into the database within the three weeks of the internship. They managed to add 649 new object entries which represented more than 3,000 items and greatly enjoyed the experience.

It has been particularly pleasing that, in such a difficult year, NORAH has been able to continue its work supporting archives. It is fortunately in having the support of knowledgeable and enthusiastic trustees who are helping it grow so that it can continue supporting local history work in Norfolk.

Luke Shackell is Archivist at the Norfolk Record Office

https://www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk/

Bristol Record Society
Sales Manager needed

We are looking for a Sales Manager to sell our books to libraries and other customers. The work is unpaid, but the manager will be entitled to a printed copy (or pdf) of each volume.

The Society usually publishes a book every year, sometimes two. These need to advertised to regular customers, invoiced to their requirements, and dispatched subject to payment arrangements. There is also a strong back list, against which orders are made. And, subject to Covid, there are occasional events at which it is good if we have a sales stand.

From 2021 we shall produce each new volume in two formats, digital pdf and printed cardcover, so that customers will have the opportunity of buying either or both.

The Sales Manager should keep records of customers, their orders and payments, and the items supplied. This does not call for any accounting or special IT skills, though being on e-mail is necessary, and keeping the records in spreadsheet form will be useful.

The Sales Manager will be an officer of the Council (Managing Committee) and may be a member (this carries the responsibility of a Trustee for policies and practice generally); but need not be an historian, though an interest in the Society's work will help.

The Sales Manager will be expected to produce a full report each year; to keep Council informed of any special news or difficulties in between; and to maintain contact with the Treasurer, normally by e-mail.

For our work and publications, see http:///www.bris.ac.uk/Depts/History/bristolrecordsociety/index.htm

Questions, expressions of interest or applications to the Treasurer, Dr J Harlow, Jonathan.Harlow@uwe.ac.uk or 01454 775731

Harpenden Museum

David Keen

A museum for Harpenden was projected as far back as the 1920s when a local benefactor, Victor Tylston Hodgson collected some artefacts. Unfortunately for Harpenden in 1922 he moved to Fort William where he founded the West Highland Museum. Harpenden Urban District Council took over the Hodgson artefacts and added to these over the years. This early part of the collection reflects what people thought a museum should contain in the 1930s, so we have an eclectic collection ranging from a Samurai sword to a pair of 17th Century boots reputed to have been left in Harpenden by Oliver Cromwell.

From time to time a museum was mentioned locally, but it wasn't until 1973 when the Harpenden and District Local History Society was formed that it looked more hopeful. In 1979 the society was granted a lease of the caretaker's cottage behind the historic Harpenden Hall, then in use as the local council offices. Sadly Harpenden Hall was sold in the 1990s. The new owners would have renewed the lease, but at a commercial rate way beyond our means. Temporary accommodation in a portacabin was offered, enabling the Museum to achieve accreditation in 2002. Then the landlord demolished the portacabin, accreditation was given up and the collection dispersed to members' homes. Harpenden Town Council offered the use of a small room in their new offices at Park Hall, enough for the archives but very little else. Work on cataloguing the collection proceeded, most being carried out by our curator Les Casey, a former schoolteacher in the town.

When St Albans District Council announced that Harpenden Public Hall was to be redeveloped and replaced by a 'cultural hub' we negotiated the use of a small space in one of the function rooms for Harpenden Museum. The hub, to be known as the Eric Morecambe Centre, is the former sports hall in Rothamsted Park, the main part of which is to be a theatre. There were concerns over the space, which was nothing like large enough for our needs. Les had given up curatorial activities because of poor health. He died, but continued to serve the society by most generously bequeathing his house to us. The property was sold and, most unusually for a museum, we found ourselves in possession of sufficient funds.

Les Casey's bequest enabled us to offer to lease the whole of one of the function rooms for 25 years and we are now close to signing an agreement with St Albans District Council. The plan was for the gym to close and move the exercise equipment to two temporary venues; our museum space and the side room in the Public Hall where we held our meetings. When the new Leisure Centre, combining the gym and the swimming pool was ready, the temporary venues would close and work would have started on converting the crèche/gym room to our museum.



some objects from Harpenden Museum's collections

The Eric Morecambe Centre was to have opened in January 2021 and our museum a after this, once we had fitted it out. That was the plan! However:
1. The roof of the former sports hall was found to be too weak to meet the requirements of the theatre. This put back the opening date to May 2021.
2. The Council's project manager left.
3. Coronavirus has delayed everything.

Work on the Leisure Centre and the Eric Morecambe Centre continues. The exercise equipment has moved out of the gym, but the future museum space is still a building site.

We hoped to make use of the

breathing space to complete indexing both the artefact and document/photographic collections, but then came lockdown. Our archive store in Park Hall was closed to us and we were not able to access the artefacts stored at Sandridge Gate Business Centre in St Albans. It is important that this work is completed before we move the artefacts again. We have lists of accessioned items, but too often the items are missing their accession number; this needs to be remedied so that we know what we have in the collection and where it is stored. As lockdown restrictions lifted, we were able to get on with the job.

We need to order roller racking for archive storage and display cabinets for the museum, but this can't be done until we have access to the room. It is essential to get a feel for the space before we install expensive display cases and, in any case we have nowhere to store cabinets at the moment.

There are things which **can** be done. We would like to have a video loop timeline, about four minutes long, to introduce museum visitors to Harpenden's history. We should be able to find the text and images ourselves and have contacted a producer to guide us through the process.

Looking ahead, in a positive frame of mind, our museum will only be open when we can staff it with volunteers, so we shall need an army of those. We have visited lots of small local history museums and it is clear that knowledge of Harpenden's history or familiarity with museum objects is less important than being a friendly face to welcome visitors.

The pandemic has rendered predictions wholly unreliable, but we look forward to opening Harpenden Museum at some point in 2021 and welcoming visitors, probably masked and socially distanced, to see our collection. Apart from Japanese weaponry and Cromwell's footwear we'll have information about local heroes like fighter pilot John Cunningham and founder of Mencap Judy Fryd, and something about the villains such as the real spy in the Dreyfus Affair who lies in Harpenden churchyard.

David Keen is Curator, Harpenden and District Local History Society



While out walking ... (4)

The Lant Spout *(photo Ruth Smalley)*



If the admirable Baildon Local History Society's village walk booklet hadn't pointed it out we would never have noticed this stone-lined hole in a farmhouse wall just above ground level, and certainly wouldn't have guessed what it is for. In Baildon (which is in West Yorkshire near Shipley) they call it a Lant Spout and it was used for passing urine (which they call the 'weetings') out of the building to drain into a tub. Why would anyone want to do that?

Stale urine was a valuable commodity for the softening and fulling of cloth, since it produced ammonia, an effective (if somewhat unpleasant) cleansing agent. In woollen manufacturing districts, therefore, it was routinely collected and stored ready for industrial use. In the north this plentiful liquid was known as 'lant' but in the west country (where I have encountered reference to a similar practice) it was 'sig'. Householders were loaned a tub by the cloth factories. They were paid when they had filled it, and the contents were then collected and taken away in a barrel on wheels, a 'sig-dilly'.

Lant comes in various qualities. Methodist urine, Alan Crosby tells me, was preferred in Lancashire, because it had a low alcohol content. William Partridge, a Stroud clothier who emigrated to America and wrote a treatise on such matters in 1823, said that cider and gin drinkers were considered to give the worst, and beer drinkers the best; though urine from persons on a plain diet was stronger and better than that from luxurious livers (if he meant it anatomically should that not be kidneys?). In Trowbridge, I was told, they preferred to collect 'morning urine' rather than that produced in the evenings outside pubs.

So that is the humble lant spout -I don't think it will make it into anyone's history of the world in 100 objects.

John Chandler

Telling Our Story

Kim Mansell

To celebrate 100 years of The Royal British Legion, BALH members are being asked to help uncover its rich history in our communities over the last century.

On May 15th 1921, four national organisations of ex-Servicemen, which had established themselves after the First World War, joined together to form The British Legion. The Legion supported those who had suffered as a result of service during the First World War, and we've been helping the Armed Forces community and their families ever since. Today, much of our work is taken on by members, community fundraisers and volunteers and, after the struggles of 2020, it is more important than ever to recognise the importance of the local community work that The Royal British Legion is proud to have been providing for 100 years.

The project, *Telling Our Story*, will allow all the wonderful people who contribute to the work of the Legion to share their experiences and memorabilia. We want to showcase their fantastic work and hope that the British Association of Local History can help us to piece it together. The submission illustrated here was sent along with the story of Effie Pears, Chairman of the Lexden Branch Women's Section (Colchester, Essex). She volunteered there for over 50 years, raising funds for local and national services. She was thanked by the Queen Mother for her contributions to the Legion in this letter.



CLARENCE HOUSE
S.W.1

3rd October 1979

Dear Mrs. Evans,

Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother has bidden me write to thank you for your letter and to tell you how impressed Her Majesty was by all that Mrs. Pears, your Chairman, has achieved during the last fifty years.

As President of the Royal British Legion Women's Section, The Queen Mother was naturally delighted to hear of her devoted endeavours on behalf of such a worthy cause, and I am to say how grateful Queen Elizabeth is to you for writing as you did.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Rascot

Lady-in-Waiting



Effie's effort wins a Royal reward

SEVENTY-EIGHT-YEAR-OLD Effie Pears completed her £,000th charity poppy this year for the Royal British Legion . . . and received a letter from the Queen Mother congratulating her on her 50 years' service.

Mrs Pears, of Straight Road, Colchester, is a dedicated member of the British Legion and has been for the past 50 years.

She is chairman of the Lexden Branch Women's Section and, despite being severely handicapped, has never once missed a meeting — except when in hospital.

We are looking for more inspirational Legion stories like this, but smaller contributions are just as important to tell the story of our first century. This project focusses on what these individuals, branches and teams have contributed to their communities as a part of the Legion. We are therefore asking BALH to put their research and story-telling skills to good use and find out these people's stories and help them to put them down into a structured format, or even a video/audio file, so that they are never forgotten and continue to be appreciated. These could be big stories of amazing achievements and long-service, or they could be a short, simple story of good times as a part of the Legion.

The Royal British Legion Centenary

This campaign closes at the end of February which is why we greatly appreciate your help in reaching more people in this short amount of time. If you have any questions or would like to get involved please email us today at TellingOurStory@britishlegion.org.uk.

Kim Mansell is RBL Centenary Campaign Manager

There are some fascinating examples already on the website:
https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/things-to-do/membership/our-members/legion-100/telling-our-story

[shortened URL https://www.balh.org.uk/QMK116]

Cultural gifts and archives accepted in lieu of inheritance tax

Margaret O'Sullivan

What have King Aethelred the Unready, John Wesley and Clement Attlee in common? The answer is that all feature in news of recent cultural gifts and archives accepted in lieu of inheritance tax.

For many years, historians have benefited from national schemes which enable owners of archives and other material judged to be of pre-eminent importance to offset their value against tax liabilities. These opportunities have been increased by the Cultural Gifts Scheme which allows owners to take advantage of arrangements during their lifetime. All offers are independently assessed, allocated to locations where they are publicly available, and reported on their website by Arts Council England which administers the schemes.

Among the cultural gifts accepted recently were sixty-one Staffordshire religious figures, mostly in earthenware, all dating from about 1835 to 1875. Why are these of interest to the local historian? Most were produced in potteries in North Staffordshire for which documentation is poor, if not completely absent. Methodism, particularly Primitive Methodism, was especially strong in the area, and this is reflected in the work of many potters. Figures of John Wesley were very popular, but the manufacturers also looked at what would sell in new markets.

After the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England in 1850, they produced Catholic figures for customers throughout Britain and abroad. Their sources were often engravings found in 19th century illustrated bibles, which in turn were derived from paintings. Consequently, these three-dimensional representations of religious imagery might be the closest many owners would get to original works of art. As well as being evidence of the significance of religion and religious affiliations in the home lives of purchasers, they also demonstrate the importance of contemporary social initiatives such as those associated with the Temperance Movement and groups such as the Band of Hope (now Hope UK). Commercially produced to be widely affordable and described as 'stories on the mantelpiece', these figures are examples of popular art and culture of the period, as informative in their choice of subjects as are the more familiar Staffordshire figures of royal, military, political and theatrical celebrities. This collection is now in the Potteries Museum and Art Gallery in Hanley.

Staffordshire was also the beneficiary of an Acceptance in Lieu case when the archive of the Pagets, Marquesses of Anglesey,11th -19th century, previously on deposit, was allocated permanently to Staffordshire Record Office. Exceptionally important items include the foundation document of Burton Abbey, the confirmation of privileges and lands dated 1004 by King Aethelred II ('the Unready'), concerning grants in his will by the Abbey's founder Wulfric Spott. Furthermore, an estate roll, dated before 1115, from the Abbey incorporates material from 'the King's Book' (another name for Domesday Book), and is said to provide evidence of how local data was gathered. Other Burton Abbey records include royal charters issued by Kings Stephen (d. 1154) and Edward I (1239-1307), and the series extends further up to the Abbey's dissolution under Henry VIII when Sir William Paget acquired the properties from the Crown.

Historians in Scotland benefited from Acceptance in Lieu of family papers and books from the Napiers of Merchiston near Edinburgh. John Napier of Merchiston (1550-1617) was a mathematician, astronomer and occultist, known for the discovery of logarithms, and considered one of the most significant Scottish scientists of the early modern period. Books in this offer illustrated his interest in both religious and mathematical subjects, while later items are of interest to the historian of domestic affairs in Scotland during the time of Charles I, the inter-regnum, and the subsequent reign of Charles II. These books and papers have been allocated for the present to Edinburgh Napier University.

Twentieth century politicians are represented in other Acceptances in Lieu: papers of Clement Attlee (1883-1967) were allocated to the Bodleian Library; those of Tony Benn (1925-2001), the Labour Party's longest serving MP from 1950 to 2001, to the British Library;

and records of Hugh Trenchard, 1st Viscount Trenchard (1873-1956) , the 'father of the Royal Air Force', to the RAF Museum. Trenchard served during World War I; became Chief of the Air Staff during the formation of the RAF, 1919-29; and subsequently was Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police Force, 1931-35. One of the many politicians with whom Trenchard corresponded from the Second World War to the end of his life was Clement Attlee.

Cultural Gifts and Acceptances in Lieu might seem rather specialised, but year on year they contribute considerably to the resources available to historical researchers, while the schemes help to safeguard for the future the integrity of personal, family, estate, political and business archives of outstanding importance.

February is LGBT+ History Month

https://lgbtplushistorymonth.co.uk/

This year's theme is 'Body, Mind, Spirit', linking to PSHE elements in the national curriculum. There are resources on the website for educators, students and parents, as well as information about events around the country.

March is Women's History Month,

including International Women's Day on 8 March

I have failed to find a central source of information in UK for this. Here is a sample from an online search:

https://www.internationalwomensday.com/

https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/teach/womens-history-month-international-womens-day/z7rr6v4

https://www.rmg.co.uk/see-do/women

From USA:

https://womenshistorymonth.gov/

https://www.womenshistory.org/womens-history/womens-history-month

https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/womens-history-month

Contributions welcome: if anyone, as an individual local historian or a local history society, is celebrating either of these 'History Months' this year please send me a note about it, with an illustration if possible, for the next issue. And when you are planning for 2022 let us know in advance!

email editor.lhn@balh.org.uk

Teacher fellowship update

The Covid restrictions have delayed the progress of the Teacher Fellowship but things are now back on track. The successful candidates have been selected from a strong field of 34 applications. An online shortlisting took place in late November with Tim Lomas and Claire Keenan representing BALH. Six excellent applicants were chosen, covering the primary sector, and six more for the secondary sector. The application process was rigorous with a requirement to provide examples of local history work already done. In the end it was possible to select from a variety of different experiences and geographical areas. The course tutors, Bev Forrest for primary and Michael Riley for secondary were also part of the shortlisting process.

Candidates have now been informed and the schedules sent out to the successful applicants providing details of the programme and expectations. Although the dates have had to be re-arranged, it is now planned to hold the residential conference on September 1-3 almost certainly in Lincoln. This will be followed by the online tutoring lasting until November 2021.

Participants will come together again on 4 December probably in London. The aim of this day will to plan and finalise resource development by the Fellowship participants. The outcome will hopefully be a set of high-quality local history resources and teaching ideas that can be adopted and adapted by schools.

These resources from the 12 successful applicants will be available on the BALH and Historical Association websites in 2022.



40 years on . . .

Val Bott

We are proud to have run thirty-nine annual West London Local History Conferences; a souvenir has been assembled to mark the fortieth in November 2020 and not only records the themes and speakers but also celebrates the fact that the sponsoring societies have sustained the conference effectively. Reviewing the programmes of talks confirms both the quality and the quantity of local history research that has been going on in our area over 40 years. Furthermore, at each conference our societies' bookstalls have offered publications, which have improved from the typed and duplicated information sheets of the early 1980s to beautifully designed and commercially successful books.

The first conference, in September 1981, was promoted by Jeanne Stoddard of the Fulham & Hammersmith Local History Society. She persuaded neighbouring societies to get involved and share any financial loss; in fact the conference made a profit of £62.10. She invited historian Prof David Reeder to chair it, a role he took for almost every conference until his death in 2005.

By 1983 the consortium of societies covered Barnes & Mortlake, Brentford & Chiswick, Fulham & Hammersmith, Hounslow, Richmond, Twickenham and Wandsworth. The Shepherds Bush history group was involved from 1984 to 2009, Acton joined in 1988, the West Middlesex Family History Society in 1992 and the Little Ealing History Group in 2016.

At first a different society acted as host each year, finding an easily accessible local venue and organising refreshments. The societies continue to be responsible for selling tickets to their members. The cost was £2 a head at the beginning and for some years tickets bought on the day cost more than those bought in advance - this was eventually abandoned as too confusing! No society wished to host the 1985 conference but Brentford & Chiswick took it on at the new Waterman's Arts Centre, returning there in 1986.

Anxiety over potential financial losses continued as costs fluctuated, but the societies need not have worried - the loss in 1984 had been 4½p and in 1988 £10.11. In 1986 the surplus brought £12.51 for each society.

During the 1980s there were two changes. First, the consortium became a permanent steering group with James Wisdom as chairman, Diana Gunasena as secretary and Gordon Spencer as treasurer. It looked for a regular venue, and from 1989 the conference became established at Hounslow's Montague Hall. The agreement was to share both the risk and the profits, and the funds were managed through a central bank account. Though ticket sales varied between 95 and 137 according to the theme, from 1989 when the surplus was £271.96 funds were usually retained rather than being disbursed

Choosing a relevant theme and excellent speakers was the key to attracting an audience. However, the event had to be a sociable one and when Mary Harper chaired the planning meetings in the 1990s the minutes show that a great deal of time was spent on practical matters like providing refreshments and lunches for sale, personally run on the day by Mary herself. From 1992 this was reduced to providing a lunch where steering group members welcomed the speakers, making it a comfortable experience for them.

The group gradually amassed a nest egg, giving us comfort that we could deal with a sudden rise in costs or losses due to poor ticket sales. We risked bringing in outside caterers during 2002 - 2006 (instead of doing teas, coffees and lunches ourselves!) but this eventually proved rather expensive. The remodelling of Montague Hall in 2013-14 reduced the space and ran late leaving us, at very short notice, without a venue. Our posters, leaflets and tickets were hastily reprinted but the hire of the Parish Rooms in Bedford Park proved expensive. The audience still came despite a higher ticket price and we were able to cover the extra costs.

Our awareness of the local history community in west and south-west London has ensured that we have found impressive speakers. Each year speakers have shared recent research.

Some has been work done in spare time by members of our societies, amateurs producing very professional outcomes. A few museum, library and archive professionals as well as authors of relevant publications have also contributed. Starting with 35mm slides on a Kodak Carousel we have progressed through modern over-head projectors with acetate images, to today's digital presentations. From 2003 we have included an after-lunch session with readings from contemporary documents relating to our theme; the committee has found quirky and entertaining pieces and provides the variety of voices to read them.

Since 2015 we have been based at the University of West London's Brentford Campus, well placed for public transport and with free parking. This has suited us very well, with well-equipped lecture rooms, space for the stalls and the tea and coffee breaks, and a café for lunch. A bonus has been the cheerful 'student ambassadors' who are on hand each year to help. Sadly the Covid-19 pandemic has prevent our returning there in 2020.

Thanks go to all who have helped make the conferences a success, giving time, energy and ideas in the planning and also in providing our enthusiastic audience. Today email has enabled us to reduce time spent in face-to-face committee meetings. Over the last 40 years some individuals have given very long service which should be acknowledged here. Liz Velluet has acted as Secretary to the Conference since 1988. Rita Ensing ran our publicity for many years and was also treasurer during 1989 to 1999 when Janet McNamara took over the treasurer's role. Val Bott has chaired the committee since 1997 and has shared the role of chairing the event with Neil Robson since 2018.

see back cover for a selection of the conference posters

The full text of the souvenir compilation, containing the programmes of all the conferences, can be found at

https://www.balh.org.uk/QXZ112



Congratulations

We are delighted that **Dr Nigel Tringham** has been awarded MBE in the 2021 New Year Honours List. The citation is 'Lately Editor, Victoria County History of Staffordshire. Services to Local History'. This is in recognition of compiling volumes of the Staffordshire VCH for 40 years, and the last 5 (on the Tamworth volume, which is coming out in February, having been seen through the press during lockdown) have been in his 'retirement'.

Nigel has also edited the *Transactions of the Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society* for nearly as long, and also with the Staffordshire Record Society for quite a while. Another significant contribution has been running the Keele Latin and Palaeography Summer School for two decades; this is of great value to local historians, providing the skills and encouragement for them to use medieval and early modern documents.

Nigel Tringham was a Trustee of BALH from 2005 - 2011, and 2013-2019. He is a very long-serving member of the Publishing Committee, which he chaired for many years, where his knowledge and experience is much appreciated.

Other historians mentioned include **Michael Wood** OBE for services to Public History and Broadcasting; archaeologist **Richard Osgood** MBE for services to Defence and Heritage; and BEMs for **Terry Bracher** for services to Heritage and Public Libraries in Wiltshire; **John Jasper**, volunteer at Coldharbour Mill Working Wool Museum and Wellington Arts Association; **Rachel Nichols**, for voluntary service to the Topsham Museum, South Devon; **Robin Walton**, for services to History and to the Community in Hayling Island, Hampshire.

We offer our congratulations to these people, and to others who have maintained the efforts of local history societies, museums and archives during the past year. No doubt amongst the many recognised 'for services to the community during Covid-19' are included those who continued supporting local history in various ways.

The Federation for Ulster Local Studies

Patrick Devlin

During the 1900s many enthusiasts formed local history, folklore, archaeological and genealogy societies, dedicated to the study and understanding of their local past in the broad sweep of social and cultural development. Without the work of these local historians and others, much of what the professional historian now takes for granted could have been lost forever.

In 1974 some societies formed the Federation for Ulster Local Studies as umbrella group to champion the cause of local studies and to develop the research and publishing skills of those already involved. It reflected the historical, cultural, and geographical nature of the broad sweep of Irish history drawing membership of the historic nine-county province of Ulster.

From the outset it had a dual role. It acted as the unified voice of local historical studies in Ulster, calling for greater recognition for those involved and the proper resourcing of their activities, and adopting a support role for the societies. It organised much needed low-cost public liability insurance cover for those engaged in meetings and field trips. It delivered conferences, workshops, and seminars where society members could meet, exchange ideas and experiences.

These activities also helped the Federation to build relationships within and between communities that had suffered greatly as a result of the Troubles. This community relations role was supported first by the Central Community Relations Unit and later by the Community Relations Council and grant was provided for two staff and a development office. Sadly, the office had to close in 2005 and the withdrawal of the grant in 2007 resulted in the redundancy of the staff and a reappraisal of the Federation's role. It was agreed that the Federation should continue in a purely voluntary capacity, with individual members of the Executive Committee taking on the several discrete roles of the former full-time staff. The new structure was accepted at the 2007 AGM and has continued in this mode ever since.

The Federation has always encouraged societies to publish and has sought to give an opportunity to local historians to see their work in print. It brought into being the Ulster Local History Trust Fund to support publications in local history and itself published a periodical Ulster Local Studies for the first twenty-five years. Since 1999 the Federation has published a magazine style journal entitled Due North which promotes local history and the activities of the local societies.

Over the years the Federation has run events that have addressed most areas of local history as well as organising field trips in Ireland, and to Scotland, continental Europe, and the USA. It advises a wide range of bodies from museums to Libraries and has a close working relationship with local record repositories. It has campaigned continually for the protecting of local place names and the maintenance of the townland as a central part of local identity. The Federation has always seen itself as part of wider all-island movement to research and publish local history, folklore, archaeology, and genealogy. It developed a close working relationship with the Federation of Local History Societies, that had been formed in 1980 in the Republic of Ireland, and undertaken many joint projects, including joint seminars and workshops, exchange visits, joint visits to Great Britain and to Europe that continue to this day.

Federation for Ulster Local Studies
ENHANCING LOCAL STUDIES

Local history has come a long way since that first meeting in 1974. It is now taught to university level and is firmly embedded in the mainstream of local broadcasting. A great deal has been achieved over the last forty-six years and as new challenges emerge, the Federation will continue to support and celebrate local studies.

Maintaining the integrity and vitality of a local history society during the coronavirus crisis

Peter Steere.

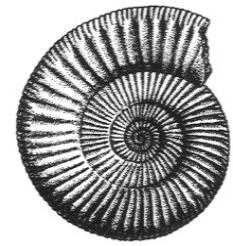
How the Marcham Society has adapted.

I am sure that when the first reports of a new corona virus emerged in January of 2020 many people thought that this was another short lived virus such as SARS, deadly to a small group but a nuisance and no more to the rest of the world. How wrong we were. Even when the first lockdown was called on March 23rd there was a general feeling that it would be short-lived and our lives would return to normal soon enough.

The Marcham Society eventually realised the new reality and grasped the nettle of new technology to help us keep our programme of talks for our members by utilising online video conferencing technology.

Security
In the early days of wide Zoom usage some bad publicity had emerged in the media about unauthorised users disrupting Zoom conferences etc. We examined the situation and saw that Zoom Communications had acknowledged the problem and quickly fixed many of the security loopholes. The paid for version of Zoom includes features that allow the host to control who enters the conference, passwords can be enabled and randomised, and the conference is also encrypted end-to-end. We did acknowledge, however, that no internet software is completely secure and it was the individual member's own decision as to whether they wanted to take advantage of these online talks. As a result we have had a few members not renew their subscription for the time being.

Speakers
The next challenge was to find speakers who were willing to give their talks over Zoom. In these early days, when it was not the norm, there were only a few pioneers who were happy to try this method. We were very grateful to our first speaker who had to work with us whilst we fully understood how to work with Zoom, but we now feel confident using the platform and we have mapped out a new programme running through to May 2021 with a list of speakers now willing to present over Zoom.



Results
At our first talk we had over 30 connections and some of those were couples, so we estimated that around 40 people came online for the talk and those numbers have been consistent in the talks that we have given since then and our membership has actually increased this year.

There have been some interesting effects of providing the talk over Zoom. Maps and diagrams or high quality photographs can be seen clearly on members' own screens, which when projected in our large hall it is not necessarily the case. On the negative side there is a lack of audience reaction, questions are generally fewer and the speaker has to work extra hard to engage the audience.

One delightful unintended consequence is that we have been able to welcome members back who may have left the village but still wanted to keep in touch. Canada is currently the furthest point from which a member has joined us.

Once we are allowed back into our village hall we will not want to lose the advantages that have been gained by engaging fully with this technology and we fully intend to offer our talks in a hybrid fashion. We will meet in the hall, but we will also open a Zoom meeting concurrently so that our more distant members can still join in with our activities via their internet connection. Isn't technology wonderful!

Peter Steere is Chairman, The Marcham Society, Oxfordshire. This was written in November 2020.

https://www.marchamsociety.org.uk/

The freedoms of this brave new world

Margaret Mills

I'm a part-time lecturer in adult education teaching history and English literature, including tutoring for the well-known adult education educational charity WEA.

Thinking back to March of this year, when the impact of Coronavirus suddenly hit home for us all, all our planned face-to-face courses had to be hurriedly transferred to online provision. The WEA - like many other adult education providers - did incredible work in a very short space of time to avoid disappointing our students already enrolled on forthcoming courses. Organising the transition of planned courses to online (using Zoom) was a huge task, but adult education providers quickly realised that adding extra course provision was needed, in order to offer prospective students a way of using our enforced isolation productively by keeping busy studying a huge variety of different subjects. We 'hit the ground running' with online courses from early spring 2020.

We were experiencing not only extra time on our hands at home, but a completely new way of life, where the boundaries were largely our own four walls and our garden, if lucky enough to have one. Keeping busy, interested and occupied has rarely been so important and as an added incentive many course providers have provided courses free of charge. The response was tremendous and whilst I can't claim for one minute that as a tutor I found the transition to online always easy, it was the interaction with students, both local familiar faces I knew well and those joining us from all over the country that kept me going.

It was, as they say, a learning curve for all of us and yes, we survived this Brave New World and even began to see the positives. No longer worried about seeing a course we'd love to do but finding the logistics impossible, our chains had burst and we were free! Not able to drive? Living in a rural area without public transport? Health problems making it difficult to travel? Too far to travel? Our local College/other provider's courses not really our cup of tea? None of these were insurmountable any more - we could enrol on any online courses offered (on subjects from floristry to forensics) - and enjoy participating from the comfort of our own sofa. We've even enjoyed virtual coffee mornings outside our WEA classes, complete with 'who is eating the nicest cake' competition decided before the cakes were consumed (not easy)!

The online courses continue for the foreseeable future. Of course, they can never completely replace face-to-face personal interaction, and for some of our students the idea of taking part in online learning doesn't appeal. I fully understand this and the point that the social element isn't quite the same. But it's good to know that out of something as terrible as this pandemic has come something really positive for so many. Looking back, I'm even grateful for those times when I've suffered acutely from what I'd call the 'I'm going to crash and burn' feeling the night before teaching my very first online course. As I might have expected, adult students have embraced this new way of learning, have taken it in their stride and it's been very much 'business as usual'.

We've survived - and I'm certain that for your part, you will have found your own way to negotiate any changes to the way you go about your historical studies and research, so congratulations, I hope it's all gone well.



BALH New for 2021

Local History Hour

Joe Saunders

As we continue to miss the regular programmes of talks at our local history societies, BALH has been finding ways to bring local history to you online. Our Ten Minute Talks, blog and social media posts have been a huge success. Looking to the year ahead we face more uncertainty about in-person events, so BALH is organising a new series of online lectures on a wide range of subjects for you to enjoy from home.

Local History Hour will run on the last Thursday evening of each month. The format will be conversational, with a host and two guests speaking from different perspectives on a given theme. The idea is to offer something different from a straightforward lecture, and hopefully to give you all something engaging. Our first contributor will speak broadly on a particular theme, examining it from a national or regional perspective and looking at how someone might go about researching the topic. Our second speaker will have an interest or specialism in a local study relating to that same theme and will talk on their specific case.

We'll be running *Local History Hour* on Zoom Webinar. Attendees will sign up in advance, and attendance will be free to individual members of BALH, with a £5 charge for non-members. We are piloting a new scheme with our digital output, to offer benefit to the members of our Society members. For Local History Hour, the charge for these will be £3. We will also be recording the sessions and making them available on our website on the same basis for one month, before making them freely available to all. For each talk you sign up for you'll get a link, this will take through to the waiting room on the night.

Zoom Webinar works differently to the Zoom meetings many of you will have become familiar with this year. When we open the doors of the waiting room to let you into the event you'll be able to see and hear your host and speakers but they won't be able to see or hear you. Instead, you may submit text questions via a Q&A box, as well as a general chat box. At the end of the hour we'll have time for the submitted audience questions.

As we go to print we're finalising our schedule. Please look out for announcements during the year here in *Local History News*, our e-newsletter, website and social media accounts. We look forward to welcoming you all.

Online Skills Workshops and Webinars

Claire Kennan

Saturday 13th February 10.00-12.00: How to get your local history research out there! Public Engagement and Collaborative Working (a student special) with Claire Kennan (BALH)
This workshop will offer practical guidance on how academic research can be communicated to wider audiences, the opportunities that are available for collaborative and partnership working and how your research can have an impact in the wider world. It will focus on the specific support and opportunities offered by BALH ranging from writing blog posts to producing podcasts, working with teachers, local history societies, museums and much more.
Please note that this session is only available to students registered on a recognised Masters or PhD course of study at an HEI. ECRs who are within 5 years of completing their PhD are also welcome to attend.

Wednesday 10th March 18.00-19.00: How to grow your local history social media presence with Daniella Gonzalez (BALH)
BALH's Social Media Fellow, Daniella Gonzalez will provide an introduction to social media platforms, and how local history societies can use them to promote their work and engage with the wider history community. Practical guidance will be offered, with plenty of time for Q+A.
Please note that this webinar is open to members only.

Local History Matters - the podcast from the British Association for Local History
The BALH podcast will be launching on Monday 4th January 2021! Designed as a bi-monthly podcast exploring projects from across the UK, BALH will be showcasing the fantastic research and exciting stories that local historians are uncovering. Confirmed guests and featured topics for the podcast range from academic projects to national institutions, local museums and everything in between! The podcast will be available to listen to for free across all of the usual platforms.

BALH on Social Media
There are many new and exciting opportunities to engage with BALH on social media. You can follow us on Twitter (@BALHNews), Instagram (@balhnews) Facebook (British Association for Local History - BALH) and Linkedin (British Association for Local History) for Meet the Team Mondays, Late Night Local History and Fun Fact Fridays. If you have any events you would like to publicise to members through our social media channels, please get in touch with us at **socialmedia@balh.org.uk**

Developing your historical skills

Margaret O'Sullivan

Has undertaking a new project encouraged you to try new historical sources? To help you develop your skills, a number of practical guides are available from BALH.

Reading Early Handwriting focuses on handwriting of documents of the 16th and 17th centuries (£8.00 to BALH members)

How Much is that Worth? explains how the value of money has changed, with advice on how to interpret prices and wages from the past (£4.50 to members)

Directing the Past surveys trade and business directories from the 18th century onwards and offers cases studies about their usefulness for data for towns and villages at times of residential, communications and industrial growth (£2.00 to members)

From Chantry to Oxfam provides an overview of charities and associated legislation from the medieval period to the 20th century (£2.00 to members)

Exploring Local History is a practical guide for teachers in Primary and Secondary Schools using widely available documentary and other sources. Its emphasis is on active learning activities which promote development of key skills (£8.00 to members).

Moreover, *The Local Historian* offers a wealth of local history writing and one way to find out more is from *Unlocking the Past*, a comprehensive index to all articles published between 1952 and 1999, with a CD-Rom of abstracts and an introductory essay (£3.00 to members).

Furthermore, this issue of *Local History News* includes details of the 5th edition of the *Internet Sites for Local Historians: a directory* (£8.00 to members). *See Supplement page 4*

To buy any of these publications, please go to https://www.balh.org.uk/shop/
You can also order by email to admin@balh.org.uk or by telephone to 01625 664524. Postage and packing are extra.

Remember that wherever you are, these guides are useful! Recent purchasers have included historians in Ireland, Scotland and Canada, while *Reading Early Handwriting* has attracted buyers from as far apart as Texas and Tokyo.

The Really Useful Family History Show-

personal impressions of a virtual event 14 November 2020

Gill Draper

As Covid-19 took hold, the Family History Federation took the bold step of planning a Really Useful Family History Show to take place digitally as a substitute for the large-scale in-person genealogy events of the kind previously held by various organisations at large venues such as the NEC Birmingham or the Alexandra Palace. The ambitious aim was to make the experience of attending online similar to in-person events. Thus for the nearly 2000 visitors there were talks, a virtual goody bag, exhibitor 'booths' to replace stands, special offers on society memberships and books, free pdfs of society resources for visitors to download, opportunities to 'chat' to other visitors and exhibitors… only the coffee and hot dog stands were missing really.

BALH's booth was staffed first by Susan Moore (while I gave a local history talk elsewhere at 8.45 am!), then by me, Joe Saunders and then Susan again. My husband Stephen, who is well versed in helping with in-person events and is developing his own local history interests, helped me with some of the arcane technicalities, and BALH's own Paul Carter, our web manager also helped us and many other people. Paul had a very busy time as he was also giving a talk on 'Relating a Name to a Place'. Paul is the technical lead and co-founder of Name and Place, a software application for researchers interested in a particular place or one-name study, house histories and local history
https://www.nameandplace.com/about



continued on p 34

A life devoted to sharing Cambridgeshire history

Mike Petty

I started collecting material on the local history of my home village of Stretham in July 1949, aged about three. I was sent a picture postcard that was then about 15 years old. I still have it. I must have looked at it then and realised things had changed. I have been collecting ever since.

Having left school I got a job in Cambridge Central Library where I became acquainted with a collection of books, newspapers, maps, pictures and more that had been amassed for a 110 years and never sorted. Over the next 35 years I organised it into the award-winning Cambridgeshire Collection that by the 1990s was being used by 1,000 people each month. This was all recognised by a number of professional academic and other awards. In the evenings, and outside work, I gave talks to numerous groups and organisations, wrote articles and made broadcasts that led to the 'Librarian of the Year' Award.

After leaving the Collection a decade ago I increased the talks to some four a week to groups around the county. I also lectured to classes organised by Cambridge University and the W E A. After one of these was oversubscribed and folk were turned away I started my own 'Fenland History on Friday' meetings. These ran each week, October to May for 13 years. Speakers ranged from professional academics to fen men giving their first public talk. We outgrew the Ely Library meeting room so we switched to the Methodist Church meeting room - which itself became full.

The newspaper articles went up to seven a week covering a range of topics. In all they ran for about thirty years. Features included a daily survey of *Cambridgeshire Scrapbook* reports 'on this day' based on my indexing of 100 years of newspapers. These continue as daily posts on *Fenland History on Facebook* and are now also being published by Cambridge newspapers.

I have published the *Cambridgeshire Scrapbook* and a companion 4,000-page *Cambridge Chronicle 1888-1988* online on Internet Archive together more than a hundred other files.

They include a Cambridgeshire Bibliography: the original card catalogue of books that I spent decades typing has been withdrawn from use and replaced by a digital version that is far from user-friendly. My version is not pretty but works more easily once downloaded from Internet Archive.

Another project relates to illustrations. I've built up a digital collection of some 20,000 prints and photos going back to the 1690s that are uploaded to Google Photos. Some of these are shared in watermarked form, with folk able to obtain unmarked copies via the Collection. When indexing the papers I took copies of hundreds of the actual articles. These too are on Google Photos - users can click through cuttings of 1941, 1942, 1943 - and scores of other years. This has proved particularly valuable for local historians now that access to the Collection and other archives has been so restricted by cutbacks and lockdowns. The Internet Archive files had been consulted 53,000 times by last July.



I have set up the *Fenland History on Facebook* group which has 7,000 subscribers, most from north Cambridgeshire, though there are hundreds from Cambridge and around the world - there is even one from Norfolk (Island). It has developed as a place to seek and share information on all Cambridgeshire. Much previously unreported information has come from the followers, very many of whom are people with no 'academic' pretensions but a vast range of practical knowledge that they are happy to share.

The cutbacks that have hit Libraries and Archives have also impacted on newspapers. *The Cambridge News*' own cuttings library which was started in the mid-1960s has been closed down by the paper and the many thousand files were due to be dumped. Instead of throwing them away they were given to me and have been passed to the *Cambridge Independent*. A few of the files have been uploaded to Google Photos.

Perhaps most rewardingly, I have been able to assist once more a number of the local historians who I helped in the distant days when I was employed. They have been facing the problem of what to do with the resources they have collected and the research they have undertaken. I have helped to sort, copy and publish online many of their resources as well as ensuring their material is deposited in the Collection and the County Archives. All I need now is somebody to do the same for me!

In this way I am trying in some small way to continue to allow some of the resources built up by the Cambridgeshire Collection since 1855 to be appreciated at a time when staffing and resources have been decimated.

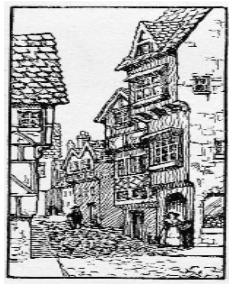
There is a link below to **Cambridgeshire History on your Computer: the Library on your Laptop.** Readers are welcome of make use of it.

Cambridgeshire History on Your Computer: Mike's Library on Your Laptop

https://archive.org/details/MikesOnlineResources

https://archive.org/details/a-cambridgeshire-scrapbook-1897-1990-by-mike-petty.-july-2020

Mike Petty was a elected as a BALH Trustee in 1997, and served on the Education Committee (now Outreach).





The Family & Community Historical Research Society will be holding its 2021 Hybrid Conference on 15 May, at the Premier Inn, Fosse Park, Leicester, and online. The theme is 'The Starvation Act'? The Poor Law Amendment Act 1834. £20 including refreshments and a buffet lunch; £5 online attendance. *http://www.fachrs.com/Shop/Shop.html*

North Staffordshire Historians' occasional journal *News and Views* for October 2020 contains an article from Paul Anderton which starts with a Stoke County Police Court appearance in November 1906 of a farmer, his wife and son, who were found guilty of employing two youths who had scarlet fever, so were complicit in spreading an infectious disease in the community. Fines and costs came to the total sum of £22, a not inconsiderable amount then. They were indeed tracked, and traced. The article then examines the history of notification of disease as public health legislation developed. *paulberne14@gmail.com*

A new history group has formed to research and record the **history of nursing in Nottinghamshire,** dedicated to raising awareness of the history of nursing in the county and to identify and profile the many individual nurses who have contributed to this history. Members include nurses and midwives, working historians, researchers and independent scholars. Please do get in touch if you have any personal nursing history. We are interested to hear from anyone who has photos or information to share on nursing history in Nottinghamshire. Speakers from the group will be available in 2021. *See website for details: https://nottinghamnursinghistory.wordpress.com/*

Allan Frost has devoted 33 years of his life to researching the history of Wellington, Shropshire, and has been honoured with the first ever award of 'The Key to Wellington', by Wellington Town Council. Founder chairman of **Wellington History Group**, Allan has edited 28 issues of the group's magazine as well as writing more than 40 books on subjects including Wellington's pubs and breweries, the Great War and The Wrekin. *https://wellingtonhistorygroup.wordpress.com/*



A project team from The Strathard Community Trust and the **Loch Ard Local History Group** has developed a new website which brings together archival material about Strathard. The site is a starting point, and includes contributions from local historians and stories which featured in the *Strathard News* about the place and its people. There is also an extensive collection of postcards and other photographs. By having the website, the history and heritage can be shared far and wide. Please make contact if you would like to contribute. Photographs and documents can be scanned and returned to you. Contributions can be emailed to *contact@strathardct.org.uk* The website can be found here: *https://strathardheritage.org/*

The winners of the inaugural Annual Prize for the Best Paper in Scottish Local History sponsored by Birlinn Ltd, have been announced by the **Scottish Local History Forum** and Birlinn. There are two winners this year, because they could not be separated, both wrote about 17th century Scotland. John G Harrison's paper is 'The Drifty Days' about the impact of a legendary period of harsh weather in 1674; and Allan Kennedy examined how Cromwell's English army garrisoned and governed Scotland, in 'Cromwell's Highland Stronghold: The Sconce of Inverness'. *https://www.balh.org.uk/CYB114*

Edmonton Hundred Historical Society reminds readers in its December 2020 *Newsletter* about zoom lectures from other organisations which are either free to book, or subject to a small charge, and in some cases past talks continue to be available online. *info@edmontonhundred.org.uk*
Gresham College
https://www.gresham.ac.uk/lectures-and-events.
London & Middlesex Archaeological Society
https://www.lamas.org.uk.lectures/
London Metropolitan Archives
https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/events/

Exercise in the fresh air is recommended under current circumstances. **The Gateacre Society** is helping by running a series 'The History of Our Green Spaces'. Number 2, Childwall Woods and Fields appears in their October 2020 *Newsletter.* Its story from the grounds of Childwall Hall, a golf club, a further education college, and the danger of housing development after the closure of the college, demonstrates how vulnerable such precious spaces can be. **The Friends of Childwall Woods & Fields** have been very active in securing its preservation as a nature reserve and informal recreation area, and their volunteers support the City Council in carrying out maintenance tasks.
www.gatsoc.org.uk



1825 engraving of Childwall Hall

On a related topic, **Staffordshire Archaeological & Historical Society**'s *Newsletter* January 2021 reminds readers that, although many places to visit now require prior booking, this does not apply everywhere, so it is still possible to make a spontaneous outing into the countryside fresh air. While it is always wise to check in advance and adhere to any additional restrictions that may be in place, there are accessible sites, many indeed managed by English Heritage and the National Trust, that are freely open. Explore locally! *www.saha.uk.net*

The Jan/Feb 2021 issue of *British Archaeology* from the **Council for British Archaeology** always contains much of interest to local history, consistently demonstrating the close relationship between the two subjects. Sutton Park lies just 6 miles from the centre of Birmingham. Recent work by Mike Hodder shows what a complex history the area has. Consisting of woodland, heathland and wetland, not at all a manicured municipal park, it has remains from prehistoric to post-medieval. His article is illustrated to show the bank and quarry pits of a Roman road, the medieval deer park boundary, a zig-zag WW1 military practice trench; and there is evidence of WW2 activity also. This would make another interesting walk. **Friends of Sutton Park Association** *http://fospa.org.uk*
www.archaeologyuk.org

Meldreth Local History Group has launched its new website. The previous one dating from 2011 has undergone a complete re-design, and is compatible with a range of different devices. The site is divided into two main parts 'Meldreth Today' which is the place to go for information about the village as it is now, and 'Meldreth's History' which has over 600 pages which can be browsed or searched. *www.meldrethhistory.org.uk*



Towcester & District Local History Society has a well-organised programme of meetings by zoom, running through the winter. In April the subject will be 'Digital Storytelling', surely something relevant to everyone at the moment. 'All of us have a story to tell, and if the present crisis has taught us nothing else it should be that we all have the means (literally) in our hands to record and share our own digital histories. All you really need is a mobile phone. Allan Davies will describe the work of a group he started two years ago at Towcester Library, with examples of the films they made, and their short, engaging stories'. *www.mkheritage.org.uk/tdlhs*

Since the summer of 2010 **Abbots Langley Local History Society** have held an archive exhibition every other year in conjunction with Abbots Langley Festival of the Arts. This year they produced a virtual Archive Exhibition. Thirteen separate links were created to a new entry on the website, an update of an existing entry, a separate downloadable document or a link to a third-party website, all under the title 'Covid-19 Lockdown Archive Event. What do YOU know about Abbots Langley? Our people and places'. Click on the Archive event poster on the homepage at *http://allhs.org.uk*

Many villages and other communities developed village clubs in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to provide somewhere for people to meet, often with the temperance objective of it being away from the temptation of alcohol in the pub. **London Colney Local History Society** has published an article in *The Record* which gives a comprehensive study of the early years of their Village Club (*right*), examining the discussions that took place, the key figures, procedures and fund raising. Of additional interest is its connection with other organisations such as the YMCA, and changes during the First World War. Similarities and differences of experience with other places would make an interesting study. *www.londoncolneyhistory.co.uk*

The patterns of occupational distribution revealed by census reports often raise curious statistics. In 1901 there were four professional artists living in Northwood, out of a population of approximately 2,500. By 1914 there were more, and a local newspaper commented that 'this was probably due to the beautiful natural surrounds which at all seasons of the year provide a perfect paradise for the painter'. The *Journal* of **Ruislip, Northwood and Eastcote Local History Society** has published an article that explores the lives and works of these largely forgotten artists and illustrators. Biographies of Joseph Finnemore (1860-1939), Enoch Ward (1859-1922) and Joseph Walter West (1860-1933) are given in the issue for 2020. *www.rnelhs.org.uk*



poster for Women's Land Army by Joseph West www.womenslandarmy.co.uk Creative Commons

'The Great Renaming' took place in the 1950s, in the City of Stroke-on-Trent which had been created in 1910 with the amalgamation of six towns that resulted in widespread duplication of street names. Barbara Phillips, writing in *The Midland Ancestor*, the journal of the **Birmingham & Midland Society for Genealogy & Heraldry**, would like to hear from anyone involved in the process. She recommends the detailed information about it to be found at *www.thepotteries.org*
www.midland-ancestors.uk
contact babsphillips@talktalk.net



The War Memorials Trust maintains the huge database War Memorials Online for which they welcome further information about the memorials partially recorded or missing.
www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk.
It also provides grants for work on war memorials throughout the country. In addition, it gives advice in a variety of situations. A recent case was the Warrington war memorial in Cheshire. These two images show how it was located near busy traffic even in its early years. In 2019 works took place to stabilise the nearby bank of the River Mersey. The memorial had to be dismantled, and replaced. Time capsules were discovered inside the cenotaph. These were removed and are now on display in Warrington Museum; they were replaced by three new ones, filled by local primary schools in collaboration with Culture Warrington. An old penny that was found cemented into the base of the memorial was replaced, with a new commemorative centenary coin added alongside.WMT *Bulletin* November 2020. *www.warmemorials.org.*





There is a steel flag pole at the junction of Crookham Street and Crondall Road, Crookham village. **The Fleet & Crookham Local History Group** received a query from the person responsible for raising and lowering a union flag on specified days. He would like to know when this tradition started, and what other villages have a similar pole. The then Department for Communities and Local Government published a 'Plain English guide to flying flags' in Nov 2012. This now comes under the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.
https://www.gov.uk/guidance/designated-days-for-union-flag-flying www.fclhg.org.uk

Many readers will be familiar with the maps on the **National Library of Scotland's** website. Additions can be found at *https://maps.nls.uk/additions.html*, and 'Ten things you may not know about our maps website' is at *https://maps.nls.uk/ten-things*. Thanks to **Troon@Ayrshire Family History Society** *Journal* 91
www.troonayreshirefhs.org.uk

The 1911 Coal Mines Act made it compulsory for mine owners to provide trained rescue teams, and stated that rescue stations should be no more than10 miles from any pit employing more than 100 men. This is the starting point for an article in *The Blackcountryman*, Winter 2020, from **The Black Country Society**. The story began with a photograph of the Baggeridge Colliery Mines Rescue team in 1932 when they won the Garrett Challenge Cup for the third time, so were allowed to keep the trophy. Competitions were set up between teams testing every type of rescue work, including first aid, use of rescue equipment, and poison gas procedures, undertaking written, oral and practical examinations. The Garrett Cup was first awarded in 1929, replaced by the Vernon Cup in the later 1930s, and after nationalisation in 1947, there was an area competition for an NCB Cup. The article contains many more details, but also gaps - such as are there records of the South Staffordshire and East Worcestershire Mines Rescue Association? And what happened to the cups? *www.blackcountrysociety.com*

Newport News is a large, glossy magazine with a circulation of 1,600. It is published twice a year and delivered free to every household in Newport, Essex. It is clearly well-supported by local advertisers, and a team of mostly volunteer regular contributors. Although not primarily a publication about Newport's history the current issue, Winter 2020, contains a number of articles about the area's past: a social history of the coming of the railway; Newport Grammar School and the 'Pepys of Tasmania'; landed lady Adele Meyer's philanthropic work; wartime diaries and war memorials; the history of London Jock Wood; and more. Other sections can't avoid history too, such as the report from the primary school, guided walks, and obituaries. And the large section on the impact of Covid-19 will serve as a record for the future of village life in current times. *editorial@newportnews.org.uk*





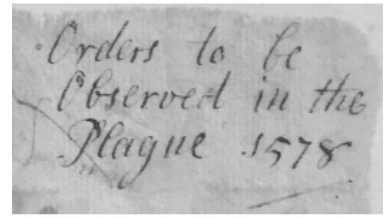
Bedfordshire Archives & Records Service has relaunched 'Community Archives' as 'Community Histories'. These are a continuously expanding resource for local history, and contain many contributions made by both staff members and volunteers. Indeed they welcome more help to fill gaps and to add detail.



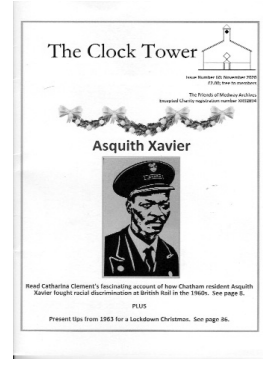
The map here *http://apps.bedford.gov.uk/archives/BedsMapCA* has pins representing a community, some are missing and some need more information. Contact archives@bedford.gov.uk. To celebrate the relaunch, there is a list of activities to help explore the local area, out and about or from home.
https://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/ArchiveEvents/Local-History-Activities.aspx

West Newcastle Picture History Collection has a new website - *newcastlephotoarchive* - containing an online search facility and other new features. Over 3,500 images, of Newcastle city centre, Elswick & Arthurs Hill, have been uploaded onto a large scale street map of west Newcastle dating from 1900. Each image is identifiable by an icon in the relevant location and clicking on an icon then brings up the underlying image together with a brief description. In time the remaining 17,000 images in the Collection (stretching out to the City boundary at Throckley) will be uploaded and thus become 'locatable and searchable'. Copies of any image can be obtained by making an online donation, via Paypal. They can also create a Christmas / birthday / gift card using the historic image of your choice. There is also a link to the original website *westnewcastlepicturehistorycollection.wordpress*, and thus to existing publications on the new website. This website also details their policy on sharing images within the spirit of The Commons and our Notice and Takedown Policy. *wnphc@yahoo.co.uk*

In *Archives@Kent* from **Kent History and Library Centre** there is, amongst much of interest, an article in their 'Document in Detail' series 'Instructions to Churchwardens to Combat the Plague' [P173/7/1]. It is dated 1578 and is in the parish archives of Harrietsham. It takes the form of a proclamation by commissioners acting for Queen Elizabeth 1, and refers to a book of orders and medicinal remedies which the churchwardens must acquire and keep for reference in the parish church, and of which they must enforce observance. Presumably this was sent to many (all?) parishes but few survive.
Kent.gov.uk/archives



The Clock Tower is the quarterly journal from **Friends of Medway Archives.** In addition to articles on Asquith Camille Xavier who fought racial discrimination at British Rail in the 1960s; Dr Thomas Plume 1630-1704; HMS Truculent; The Lloyd family of Rochester; Chatham Workhouse; and some amazing items found in a tin trunk, there are recipes for home made sweets from the 1960s.
http://www.medway.gov.uk/archives

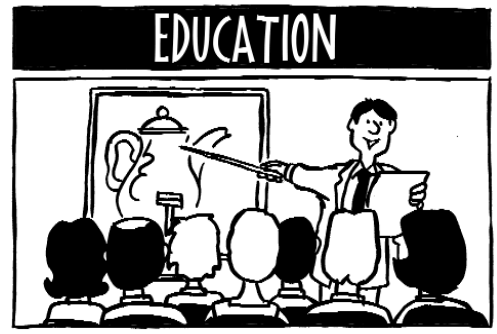


The Neston Collieries website has been relaunched, here: *https://www.nestoncollieries.org/* with further information, particularly on the later collieries which operated between 1875 and 1927. The later date means that many photos are available which have been uploaded. Other content includes a timeline of events which ranged from the comic, such as the general election candidate who decided to go underground to canvas the miners for support (he lost!), to the tragic. At least 42 men and children perished in accidents over the years - the youngest was just nine years old. For those who are keen to research their ancestors the site also includes an updated database of the 600+ men known to have who worked at the early Neston collieries (1759-1855); there are also several articles related to the mines' history. The website is also on Twitter *@nestoncollieries*



To help its members with a variety of resource needs, including training, conservation, development and exhibitions, the **Association of Independent Museums** (AIM) administers a range of grants. For a brief museums' entry in this issue, here are some examples of the support they have given recently, from their December 2020 *Bulletin*, which demonstrate the wide variety of places and purposes.

Royal Army Physical Training Corp Museum: for the restoration of historic gymnastic apparatus
Elgin Museum: for improved collections care of Elgin Museum's art works
Dundee Museum of Transport: for museum archives
Emsworth Museum:for conservation of an Edwardian wedding dress
Nantwich Museum: for preventative conservation to improved environmental conditions
Little Hall, Lavenham: for book cleaning in the Gayer-Anderson Library
Lyme Regis Museum: for conservation of the Landslide panel
The Wiltshire Museum: for conservation of the correspondence of William Cunnington I, 1799-1810
www.aim-museums.co.uk



The Historical Association competitions

The HA in partnership with The Spirit of Normandy Trust makes annual awards in The Young Historian competition.

One section is for local history. The recipients of the 2020 awards were:

Local History - primary
Lansbury Lawrence Primary School, Tower Hamlets

Local History - Key Stage 3
Eve Hesford-Thomas, Torquay Girls Grammar School

Local History-Post-16
Molly Cook, Bryntirion School, Bridgend

Another competition is 'Write Your Own Historical Fiction'; 2020 was one of the best years for entries ever. Two prizes were made for Years 5/6, and three for each of Years 7/8/9 and 10/11/12/13, together with a runner-up, and a 'best character' award, in each age band.

The Young Quills Historical Fiction competition is held annually for published works by adult authors, but the readers - young people in the appropriate age groups - decide on the shortlist.

For all the 2020 results, and information about the 2021 competitions, search for competitions on their website www.history.org.uk



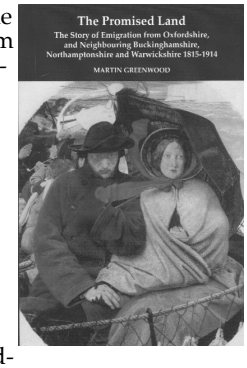
Books ...

The Family & Community Historical Research Society has just published the first two volumes in a short series 'The Home Front 1914-1915'.

Volume 1 *Care, Comfort and Support* by Gill Clark looks at the various roles aimed at helping and supporting those at home, including fund raising, producing 'comforts' for the troops, running refreshment stalls at stations, driving ambulances, and putting on entertainments to raise morale.
Volume 2 by Christine Seal is *Industry, Agriculture, Food and Rationing*. This addresses the impact and myriad problems encountered by industry and agriculture as men signed up for the forces and women stepped in to replace them.
These can be purchased at £5 each from the Society's online shop at
http://fachrs.com/Shop/shop_books.html

Keyworth & District Local History Society aims to produce two local history publications each year. This year, despite the lockdown, they have succeeded.
Two Centuries of Farming and Conservation in Keyworth 1800-2020 is by Margaret Wright. This publication was inspired by their Census event in 2018 "Farms, Barns and Rural Buildings"; and is a companion volume to *Plumtree Station 1879 - 2017*.
David Charles' *The Natural History of Rushcliffe Country Park and its historical background* is a companion volume to *The Natural History of Keyworth* (2017) and follows *Farm Animals of the East Midlands* (2018) and *Traditional Foods of the East Midlands (*2019).
http://keyworthhistory.org.uk/

The latest volume from **Staffordshire Record Society** is *Swynfen Jervis MP 1797-1867, Radical Landowner, Poetaster, Pteridologist and Shakespearian*.
Jervis was an unconventional member of the landed gentry, a founder member of the Reform Club, Radical MP, opponent of the Corn Laws and church tithes, and a supporter of the railways. His interests were wide-ranging, with literary and theatrical contacts in London, and indulgence in the Victorian craze for ferns.
Price to non-members £12 + postage of £3 UK and £10 elsewhere.
Contact the Society's Hon Sec
matthew.blake@btinternet.com
http://www.s-h-c.org.uk/



The Promised Land The story of emigration from Oxfordshire, and neighbouring Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Warwickshire, 1815-1914.

Martin Greenwood

ISBN 978 1 908738 40 0
£9.95.
It is available from the author for £12.95 including p & p martingreenwood@btinternet.com

The author admits that 'emigration is a vast subject' but this book of 140 pages presents an admirably wide ranging and detailed picture of the experiences of people who left Oxfordshire and its neighbouring counties in the nineteenth century to seek a new life overseas.

In chapter 1 we learn about the voyages of Captain Cook, and the idea of transportation and of establishing penal colonies. Chapter 2 explains the development of the major emigrant settlements. Push factors of social unrest and the operation of the poor law are examined in chapter 3, then the reader is introduced to the areas of more detailed study, in chapter 4. Social and economic conditions in specific places affected decisions to emigrate, as did the attitudes of the local authorities.

After chapter 5 explores aspects of 'The Victorian Empire, Agricultural Depressions and Trade Unionism', chapter 6 looks at the period of greatest movement 'The Great Exodus 1850-1914.' We meet individuals from many parishes, often learning the reasons they left England, and their destinations elsewhere in the world. The chapters that follow explore ports, ships and the journeys; and the wide variety of sources used, including diaries.

Three appendices add additional detail. There is a list names of the 96 Oxfordshire emigrants (42 from Tackley) who were drowned in the wreck of the *Cataraqui*, on 4 August 1845, when 399 lives were lost. The ship went down just one day short of its destination. Appendix 3 draws some points of comparison with Cornish emigration.

There are some fascinating illustrations, maps, a bibliography, notes and an index. *JH*

and more books ...
two reviews from Heather Falvey

Evacustes Phipson: His life and Utopian views and an introduction to the Croydon paintings

John Hickman, Carole Roberts, John W Brown & Stephen Williams

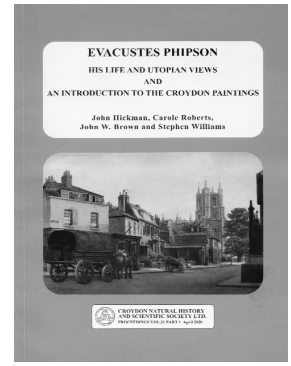
Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society Ltd 2020 106pp ISBN 978-0-906047-34-7
£12 + £1.50 p&p from 68 Woodcote Grove Road, Coulsdon, CR5 2 AD

Edward Arthur Phipson (1854-1931) was a 'topographical watercolourist'. Although he permitted himself some artistic licence – such as omitting modern details like tramlines – evidence shows that he carefully reproduced the architectural details of the buildings that he painted. By 1880 he had adopted the name Evacustes (Greek for 'ready listener'), reflecting his fascination with the Greek language and also his eccentricity.

Carole Roberts provides a detailed biography of Phipson, tracing his varied activities before his prolific career as an artist gathered momentum. He travelled widely but mostly before 1889; thereafter he began painting in earnest. Much is known about him because his prolific correspondence with newspapers, journals and individuals has survived. His particular areas of interest included socialism and uses of language, but he had, often controversial, opinions on diverse matters. As reflected in his pictures, Phipson was also interested in ancient architecture, joining the Society for the Protection for Ancient Buildings in 1905. Indeed he tried to save various buildings under threat of demolition, for example in York and Coventry, and even carried out some restoration projects himself, in particular the Tudor building in Rye now known as St Anthony's.

Stephen Williams writes about Phipson's 'communal Utopia', describing his socialist ideals and his worldwide travels. In the 1880s he was involved in attempts to set up 'social experiment's just outside Sydney and later in San Diego and Mexico. From the 1890s onwards he was interested in the English garden cities movement although he disagreed with the social purposes envisaged by Ebenezer Howard.

Including known reproductions, the compilers have calculated that Phipson produced 1,512 paintings, mostly featuring views within England(p.13) None has been found of Irish, Scottish or Welsh sites but there are 107 of continental Europe and one of Philadelphia (USA). The reason for his prolific production is that his paintings had two rather different types of purchaser: firstly publishers, such as Raphael Tuck and Sons Ltd, who manufactured postcards and greetings cards; and secondly, museums whose curators wanted records of old buildings in their area. Indeed the starting point of this book is the collection of 340 of his paintings now in the Museum of Croydon.



John Hickman introduces the Croydon paintings, noting that, like other landscape watercolourists, Phipson drew and painted outdoors during May to October, but deduces that he also copied from paintings and engravings and even photographs. Hickman and Roberts have arranged sixty of the paintings to produce four walking tours of Croydon, with accompanying maps that indicate the locations of the paintings' subjects.

John Brown comments in detail on twelve of Phipson's paintings of sites in the north of the borough of Croydon. For readers outside Croydon, however, it is his outstanding appendix that is invaluable. Following extensive communications with the relevant repositories, he has complied a list of all the paintings by Phipson so far found, listing them by county, and then by town, giving a brief description of the subject and where they are now held.

This book has been meticulously researched. Phipson himself was an eccentric individual but his paintings are delightful. His attention to detail is amazing and what is really pleasing is the superb quality of the reproductions here. This book is a joy. I am sure that my father, who was born in Croydon, would have recognised very many of the buildings depicted here.

see note at foot of next page

Celebrating Coventry

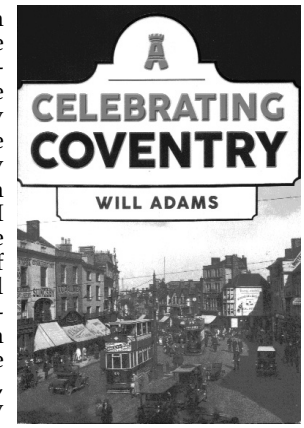
Will Adams

Amberley 2020 96pp ISBN: 978-1-4456-9816-8 £15.99

Coventry is perhaps most well known for its modern cathedral, which literally rose up out of the ruins of the city that was bombed on the night of 14/15 November 1940 (and in subsequent raids in 1941 and 1942). On the one hand, Will Adams' book celebrates the rebuilding and rejuvenation of Coventry since that devastation, which is epitomised by the cathedral designed by Sir Basil Spence; on the other hand, it celebrates the city's continuity with its more distant past, of which the neighbouring shell of old cathedral is a constant reminder. Some of the city's medieval buildings remain intact i*n situ*, such as the magnificent St Mary's Guildhall and Holy Trinity church, both a stone's throw from the cathedrals; others that survived have been relocated to Spon Street, a Conservation Area since 1969, which forms an open air museum.

Coventry had a varied industrial past. Its textile industry went through several phases, including its medieval wool and cloth industry, silk weaving and ribbon making by the eighteenth century, and synthetic textiles from early twentieth century. From the late seventeenth century clock- and watch-making became important, by 1861 employing more than 2,000 people. Means of transport were also manufactured in Coventry: first bicycles, from 1868; then motorcycles, there being 22 motorcycle manufacturers in the city in 1905; but after the First World War 'it was the car that conquered all (p 50). By 1931 there were 11 car-producing firms, although others had already opened and closed; by 1949 17,000 workers were employed by the Rootes Group; the last car plant closed in 2006; but in 2019 Jaguar Land Rover announced investment in 'clean-car technology', to be partly based in Coventry. Extensive collections relating to these industries are held in The Coventry Transport Museum, the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, and the Clock and Watch Museum, amongst others.

Also depicted is the post-war regeneration of the central shopping area. The blitz had effectively given planners a 'clean-sheet' and the resultant pedestrianisation in Coventry's 'Precinct', Upper (1951-56) and Lower (1957-60), was then a completely new town-planning concept. In 'The City at Play' Adams celebrates, amongst other things, the Belgrade Theatre (England's first post-war municipal theatre) and the influential 'Two-Tone' music genre, born in Coventry in the late 1970s.



Various education establishments are highlighted ranging from Bablake School (originally established by the Holy Trinity Guild), through King Henry VIII School, to the Universities of Coventry and Warwick. Well-known 'Coventrians' are introduced, including Lady Godiva (?d 1067); Sir Thomas White (b 1492 in Reading) who established a charity based on income from various properties, which still today provides generous interest-free loans for young businesses; Mary Ann Evans (b 1819), otherwise known as George Eliot, the novelist; and Frank Whittle, (b 1907), 'father' of the jet engine.

Celebrating Coventry, an affectionate account of numerous aspects of the city's history, is lavishly illustrated, but it has neither index nor map, both of which are vital aids to readers trying to locate particular subjects. And why, when there are so many glorious colour plates of the city now, is the jacket illustration a dull black-and-white picture of long-gone trams?

There is much to celebrate in Coventry, which has been designated UK City of Culture 2021. It is a fascinating place: I visited in both 2018 and 2019, and will return in 2021.

Evacustes Phipson

Note to previous review: there is a short illustrated article about Phipson in *Salopian Recorder*, Newsletter of the Friends of Shropshire Archives (no. 98, Autumn 2020) friendsofshropshirearchives@gmail.com 'Evacustes Phipson: watercolourist and radical socialist' by Alison Mussell



The Old Ship Inn, Bridge Street, Shrewsbury; Shropshire Archives

The attraction of GoT

Alan Crosby

While we were in County Down in September we stayed at Castle Ward, a glorious National Trust estate beside Strangford Lough. The house was closed and shuttered but the grounds were open, the weather was lovely, and the landscape is beautiful. It's an intriguing and impressive 18th century house set high above the sea-lough, with fine wide views across the narrow tidal waters to the little town of Portaferry. At the foot of the slope of woods and grassland, superbly situated down by the shore, is a Georgian model farm built round a tall and imposing early 17th century fortified tower house. We had rented The Potter's Cottage, a low single-storey building just across the gateway from the tower, close to the stableyard and the water-powered sawmill.

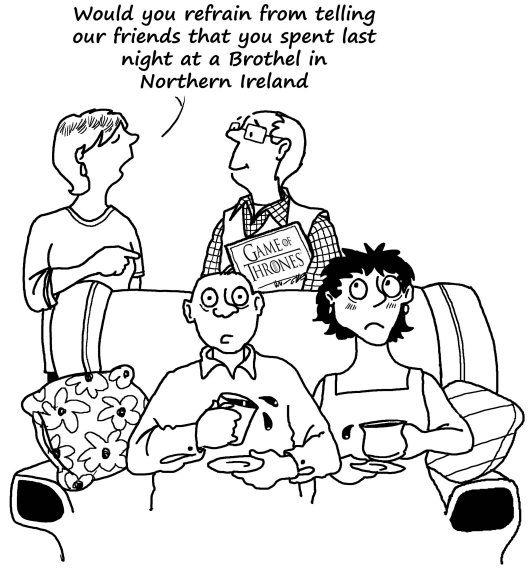
However, all is not what it seems at Castle Ward. The estate is probably not particularly well-known in its 'real life' persona, but it has a renowned alter ego. To tens of millions of people across the globe its proper name means nothing at all, but simply say to them the magic word 'Winterfell' and the response will be thrilled excitement. For, dear reader, we are talking here of Game of Thrones, in which the model farm (given a suitable makeover) is a star location, its focus being the upthrusting might of the tower house which forms a dramatic entrance to Winterfell, scene of much sensational medieval-style drama.

At this point I have to confess to never having seen Game of Thrones, and to living for some years in blissful ignorance of its significance. But having been to Northern Ireland five times in the past four years, and gaining a doubtless misleading impression that there's hardly a historic site or dramatic landscape in the province which hasn't been used for filming some scene or episode or series of GoT, I now realise the power of the cult and its global reach.

Every day we watched as GoT tours arrived. Groups of visitors guided themselves around 'Winterfell', or were shown round by expert leaders. One of the latter, suitably costumed, carried a very sizeable folder, from which he took large colour images reproducing scenes from the series. Holding them up, he showed his guests the 'then and now' so that they could compare the exciting reality of Winterfell with the rather more sedate and peaceful present setting.

Visitors made use of the props that were freely available - three young Indian men dressed in medieval cloaks and filmed each other doing sword-fighting - while other people posed against the backdrop of the tower house, and a member of the estate staff made regular tours of inspection accompanied by a huge and lovely Northern Inuit dog which had itself starred in the series and had attracted a worldwide following.

Then we began to realise that The Potter's Cottage - our temporary home - also seemed to be an object of interest. It was visually unremarkable, though perfectly agreeable, but in comparison with the others buildings around - towering, castellated, imposing - really quite ordinary. Yet people came up and peered



through the windows, took photographs, and seemed to sense that there was more to it than simply an NT holiday cottage. Since none of the four of us knew anything about GoT, we had no explanation.

A family came along and sat on 'our' bench next to the front door, and later photographed me sitting there drinking coffee. Others kept a more discreet distance, but pointed to the cottage and laughed. What was going on? Enlightenment did eventually come, during a conversation with the man who had the dog. Were we having a good time, and what about all these GoT fans? Sure, the dog was a star, and the fans certainly loved the place. Had we had any bother - had any of them tried to get into the cottage? Not long ago, he said, some guests were having a meal when a group of complete strangers walked in and demanded of them, in amazement, "What are you doing in here?". Because, he explained, did you not know that you're staying in the Winterfell Brothel?

BALH Trustee profile

Dr Adrian Webb currently edits the longest running dedicated local history publication covering the ancient county of Somerset, *Somerset and Dorset Notes and Queries*.*

His interest in the late 16th and 17th century has resulted in the creation of the Maritime History of Somerset series, as well as books on Somerset's ancient church fonts, maps, subsidies, wills, probate inventories and maritime charts for the Somerset Record Society.

His local studies include a detailed examination with Phillip Ashford of the 17th century parish of St Decuman's (better known as Watchet and Williton). This study is revealing an extraordinary range of examples of the life and times of ordinary people. Other interests include the loyalties of Somerset men on the eve of the English civil war of 1642.

Adrian holds a Masters and a PhD from the University of Exeter, and has written and lectured internationally on Great Britain's hydrographic heritage. His publications here include a book on the first detailed hydrographic survey of Bermuda, as well as contributions to international academic publications *The Maritime History of Cornwall* and *The Mariners Mirror.* He currently manages the Archive at the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, containing a worldwide collection of historic cartographic records. Many of these records reveal information about aspects of local communities around the coast of the United Kingdom.

Dr Webb is a member of the BALH Outreach Committee.

* see also *Local History News* 136 p 19

continued from p 22

Some of the other talks of particular interest to local historians included British Almshouses, Beginning Scottish Research, The Value of the National Library of Scotland maps in family [and local] history research, Mission Creep (and Why it Matters) - a title local history researchers will understand. All the talks were available initially for 48 hours after the Show but I didn't have time to listen to the many others which were more specifically genealogical in nature.

Many local historians and local history societies are now familiar with using Zoom and perhaps MS Teams, but the Family History Federation used a programme called Slack (popular with software developers!) to facilitate the Show. There was advance training for those in the exhibitor booths, which was very well done, but there were technical challenges, especially in the first hour as lots of visitors tried to join the Show. A Show website, was used as well as Slack, which caused confusion to visitors, and a number found it difficult to access the talks or the recordings, so their online availability was then extended for several days. BALH welcomed five new members and sold a number of books, similar to a live event: it must be said that it was much better value for exhibitors than a live event. Lessons have been learned about how to do such large-scale events virtually but overall the Family History Federation and its workers and volunteers are very much to be congratulated.

Gill Draper is BALH Events and Development Officer

Notes News Issues

BALH Survey

Have your say about BALH and local history! Members' views are important in determining the future direction of the Association. 400 people have so far completed the questionnaire, thank you very much for doing so. There is time left for others to join in, please take part, and encourage your friends and colleagues too - including non-members. We would like the widest possible range of ideas. www.balh.org.uk/survey

Ten Minute Talks

Another big 'thank you' to everyone who has contributed a Ten Minute Talk to the BALH website. Viewers have written to say how much they have enjoyed watching, so if you haven't yet found them do so! The varied topics and styles demonstrate the amazing richness of work going on in local history; almost all have come from independent researchers, non-professional local historians who form the bedrock of our membership. Your contributions are much appreciated.
https://www.balh.org.uk/ten-minute-talks

Congratulations

We are delighted that Dr Nigel Tringham, a long-serving BALH Trustee and member of the Publishing Committee was awarded an MBE in the 2021 New Year Honours. See page 17 for details of his citation and some other historians similarly recognised.

BALH Awards

Please note that the BALH Award for Research and Publication is for an ***article*** published in a journal sent for review. It is not possible to consider books for the award. See inside front cover for further details.

New book from BALH

The latest - 5th - edition of our popular publication *Internet Sites for Local Historians: a directory* has just been published. For further details see page 4 of the Supplement in this issue of *LHN*.

Copies of T*he Local Historian*

A member of BALH for over 20 years has written to ask if any organisation would like his hard copies of *TLH*? If anyone is interested please get in touch: editor.lhn@balh.org.uk

Fun from English Heritage website

6 video games inspired by English history
https://www.balh.org.uk/JXK113

URLs

Some website addresses are very cumbersome, so we have been using the facility to shorten them (as immediately above here). Although it starts www.balh.org.uk ... it should link to the required place.

Heritage Open Days 2021

10 - 19 September is the time for 2021 Heritage Open Days. Put the dates in your diary, with fingers firmly crossed that by then we will be able to visit places in person.

Collecting lant, or sig

Further to John Chandler's 'While out walking' note on page 12, *The Economist* 2-8 January 2021 page 59, reports on experiments for a modern use of urine, to create heat without fire from waste wood. Researchers have been looking for ways to release wood's latent heat by composting rather than combustion. Wood itself does not contain the nutrients needed to sustain the relevant micro-organisms for composting, but urine is potentially a cheap source of the necessary nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus.



Additional infill images in this issue are from *The March of History* by Futers and Martin, McDougall's Educational Company Limited, 1939, from my collection of elderly school text books, many rescued from the back of deep shelves when clearing out the History Department stock cupboard.

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***President*:** Professor Caroline Barron

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

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Dr John Chandler
Professor Claire Cross
Dr Paul Dryburgh
Professor David Killingray *(Vice-Chair)*
Dr Tim Lomas
Dr Jessica Lutkin *(Chair)*
Dr Jonathan Mackman
Ms Susan Moore
Dr Jack Southern
Dr Winifred Stokes
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Professor Geoff Timmins
Dr Adrian Webb

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Mr P A Carter (Web Manager) *ex officio*
Dr G Draper (Events & Development Officer) *ex officio*
Dr D Gonzalez (Social Media Fellow)*ex officio*
Dr C Kennan (Digital Engagement Fellow) *ex officio*

Publishing: Dr J Chandler (*Chair*), Prof M C Cross, Dr D Dixon, Dr P Dryburgh, Dr M Forrest, Dr M O'Sulllivan, 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*
Dr H Falvey *(Reviews Editor) ex officio*

BALH Social Media Fellow: Dr Daniella Gonzalez
BALH Digital Engagement Fellow: Dr Claire Kennan
Web Manager: Paul A Carter; **Editor, *The Local Historian*:** Dr Alan Crosby; **Editor, *Local History News*:** Dr Jane Howells; **Reviews Editor:** Dr Heather Falvey; **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

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REGISTERED CHARITY 285467



40 Years of conferences, photo Val Bott (see page 16)



Interns at work, Norfolk Record Office, image credit Helen Green (see page 9)



Mrs M A T Whitby believed to be by John Hoppner, courtesy of Alice Loftie, the current owner (see page 5)



(see page 15)

@BALHNews @BALHNews

Price £3.00 : free to members

Local History News

NUMBER 138 WINTER 2021 www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

BALH Local History Day 2021 Saturday 12 June

Depending on circumstances and restrictions next summer, this event will be live streamed to everyone, with ***possibly*** a limited number of socially-distanced participants who would like to be there in person. Dr Nick Barratt will give the BALH Annual Lecture on the 1921 census and local history.

The Association's 2021 AGM will also take place on this date. Further details will be available in the next issue of *LHN* and via social media. Please put the date in your diary.

BALH Regional Conference, Taunton

UNEXPECTED SOURCES FOR LOCAL HISTORY (see *LHN* 134 p 23)

BALH's programme of regional conferences has not been forgotten. It was with much sadness that the Taunton event was postponed from 2020, and will now wait until it can be held in person. The main point of our regional events is that they relate to, and take place in, a particular part of the country. Despite the efficiencies of video-conferencing, it is hard to replicate this 'sense of place' at a distance. The speakers on 'unexpected sources' are still keen to take part, and the event will be booked in again as soon as possible. At the same time the BALH Outreach Committee is actively planning for similar occasions in other areas in the not-too-distant future.

balh.org.uk

Go to the BALH website for all the latest news on the Association's activities, and much else of interest and value.

Don't forget you can contribute too!

At the time of writing, programmes of meetings and other events arranged by local history organisations are still very uncertain through 2021. Many are doing amazing work keeping in touch with their members by virtual means. The Societies Directory on our website is a good place to start if you want to know what is happening of interest to you.

BALH
BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

BALH Annual General Meeting

Virtual meeting via Zoom

[accessible online: https://www.balh.org.uk/resources-agm-2020-videos]

Saturday 12 September 2020

MINUTES

The Honorary President, Professor Caroline Barron, welcomed attendees and noted that the audience was much bigger than previous years. She thanked the Chairman and Lisa Wilson of KSAM for supporting the meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence**: Dr Virginia Bainbridge, Dr Paul Dryburgh, Dr Jonathan Mackman, Professor Geoff Timmins. A total of 113 members attended the Annual General Meeting.

2. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 1 June 2019**: The minutes of the 2019 Annual General Meeting were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising. The minutes were accepted and agreed by the meeting *nem con*.

3. **Chairman's Report**: Professor David Killingray, the outgoing chairman, noted the huge global and local changes brought about by the pandemic. He stressed the need for individuals and institutions to adapt. The BALH has explored how to assist others adapt and survive during this year and in the future. Unfortunately, the first regional conference, planned for Taunton in March 2020, had to be postponed but is being rescheduled. Other regional events are being planned for Lincoln in 2021 and the Northwest of England in 2022, all of which may have to be virtual. The newly modelled BALH website, including a new society directory, is now operational. A Teacher Fellow programme, organised by Dr Tim Lomas and Dr Claire Kennan, is progressing, and a Social Media Fellow and Digital Engagement Fellow have been appointed to take forward online engagement and outreach. Quarterly editions of *The Local Historian* and *Local History News* have been published with their usual high standard of content and production. The latest BALH publication, *Reading Early Handwriting, 1500-1700*, ed. Mark Forrest, is selling well. The next publication is likely to be a Guide to Sources for the Interwar Years. A great debt is owed to the editors [Dr Alan Crosby, Dr Jane Howells] and Development Officer [Dr Gill Draper] for their efforts over the past year. Professor Killingray warmly thanked his fellow trustees for their ideas, support and generosity of spirit.

   Professor Killingray commended his successor Dr Jessica Lutkin to the Association. The President warmly thanked him for his inspirational leadership as Chairman since 2019.

4. **Annual Report and Accounts** for 2019: the Treasurer, Dr Iain Taylor, introduced the financial statement for 2019 (pre-circulated and available on screen). The majority of revenue comes from subscriptions, which are down slightly on 2018 from c. £130,000 to £127,000. Expenditure has increased from £107,000 to £119,000. This is due to attendance at Family Tree Live, increased publication and outreach activities and the upgrade to the website, launched in June 2019. The overall outcome is a surplus of £8,500 (c. 7% of turnover).

Total net assets are now c. £108,000, a very strong financial position. The trustees have therefore decided to spend in a calculated, judicious way to enhance the benefits of membership. In the current financial year, the Association continues to do well: there are 645 individual members and 1160 society members, and the pandemic has had little net impact on membership. In an effort to control costs, the Association is giving up storage facilities, which will save £500 annually.

The annual report and accounts were accepted and agreed by the meeting *nem con*.

5. **Officers and Trustees of the Association**
Officers: Dr Jessica Lutkin, Chairman; Professor David Killingray, Vice Chairman; Dr Iain Taylor, Treasurer

Trustees: Dr Virginia Bainbridge, Dr Katie Bridger, Dr John Chandler, Professor Claire Cross, Dr Paul Dryburgh, Dr Tim Lomas, Dr Jonathan Mackman, Ms Susan Moore, Dr Jack Southern, Dr Winifred Stokes, Professor Geoff Timmins, Dr Adrian Webb

The members of the board of trustees were elected en bloc *nem con*

6. **Membership subscriptions**: It was agreed by the meeting there would be no changes to subscriptions for 2021.

7. **New Fellowships**: Dr Lutkin explained that the Association has recruited two fellows to take forward the digital and social media offering to the membership, particularly as these are time-consuming roles and as the Association wishes to provide support for Early Career Researchers in taking their careers further. The Social Media Fellow for 2020 is Dr Daniella Gonzalez; she is creating an energetic, innovative stream of content via the various social media platforms (including Instagram). The Digital Engagement Fellow for 2020 is Dr Claire Kennan; her role is to expand the digital content produced by the Association.

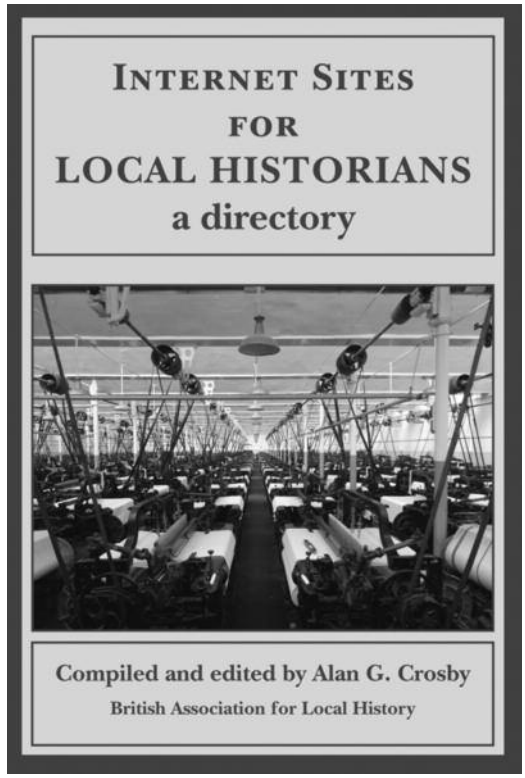
8. **Survey**: Dr Lutkin announced the launch (by October) of a new large online survey, the first since 2014. It will be open to anyone rather than simply Association members and aims to gather feedback and ideas for the future as well as to discover what is current in local history.

9. **Teacher Fellowships**: Dr Tim Lomas explained that the BALH and Historical Association had co-developed the programme of teaching fellowships to enhance resources available online, to increase awareness of the BALH and to make stronger connections with younger people. Plans have been stalled by the pandemic, though the parameters of the scheme – to select twelve teachers across primary and secondary sectors to identify leads – had been developed, guidelines had been drafted and applications have been received from teachers. The application deadline has now been extended to the end of November 2020. The plan for 2021 (around Easter) will include a residential weekend to bring expert teachers together, though dates may have to be reconsidered. Course tutors have begun to prepare their material and all delegates will work together to create high-quality materials for the BALH. We will then look forward to maximising engagement by publicity and certification. Those completing the programme will earn the title Teacher Fellow in Local History, which will be valid for three years.

10. **Independent examiners of the Association's accounts**: it was proposed that Moore Stephens (South) LLP be appointed independent examiners of the Association's accounts. This was agreed *nem con*.

11. **Any other business**: There were no further matters of business.

An Old Favourite Returns



'Further updates will be printed at regular intervals', Jacqui Fillmore promised when introducing the first edition in 2011 of her **Internet Sites for Local Historians: a Directory**. And she was right. BALH has just published the fifth edition of this bestselling title. And whereas in 2011 the directory was a slim booklet, its new successor is a substantial book of nearly 200 pages, and includes descriptions and critiques of 1000 websites which local historians will find useful and interesting, all indexed and with their full web addresses. Building on Jacqui's original concept and labours, Alan Crosby has checked, explored, expanded, revised and augmented the entries, to present a cornucopia of historical riches, from encyclopaedic to niche, mainstream to distinctly quirky.

Although it may seem strange to internet surfers that BALH produces something as old-fashioned as a book to guide them, there has in fact been a steady interest in and demand for this directory, and it makes for compulsive reading, followed by itchy keyboard fingers. From vintage calculators to Turkish baths, from sheep breeds to lost pubs – we have a website to help your research on its way.

Published December 2020. £8 members, £10 non-members.
Order through our website at www.balh.org.uk/shop.