

Local History News

Number 142 Winter 2022

www.balh.org.uk



Magazine of the British Association for Local History

AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS

- *To encourage research and publication*

One or more certificates may be awarded each year for 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 outstanding individual contributions*

Up to six awards may be made each year to publicly honour local historians of all ages who have made outstanding and significant voluntary contributions to the subject. The awards will embrace as wide a spectrum of activity as possible. Nominations and references must be submitted between 1 July and 31 December on the forms available in the July issue of *Local History News* or on our website at www.balh.org.uk/awards where further details can be found.

- *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

*Nicholas Wood's portrait by R Turner which hangs in the Wood Hall at The Common Room
(see page 9)*

Local History News

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

BALH

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FOR LOCAL HISTORY

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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 Ground Floor, 4 Victoria Square, St Albans AL1 3TF 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.

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

*Views expressed in this publication are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the
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20 years in the blink of an eye

Alan Crosby

I have now been the editor of *The Local Historian* for twenty years - two decades that have passed in the blink of an eye. During that period I've been responsible for 80 issues, which means that roughly 430 papers have been edited, together with (I'd estimate) about a thousand individual book reviews. I've drawn most of the maps and plans which have accompanied articles, and provided the majority of the photographs and images of maps for the covers ... for twenty years this has been a major element in my working life, my cherished offspring!

I absolutely love the job. I took over from Margaret Bonney in autumn 2001 (the November issue being the first for which I was sole editor) and had no hesitation about accepting the offer. I've never had a moment's regret. It's been richly-rewarding in the academic sense, and tremendously satisfying as a technical exercise - seeing each issue from (months earlier) tentative thoughts about what might be included, then liaising with contributors, meeting the challenges of squeezing as much as possible in the available space, working on the proofs. The finished product lands on my doormat and, almost always, I spot the typo that, most infuriatingly, I missed!

Authors have been almost without exception a delight. Some have become friends. Papers submitted for consideration are generally sent to an external reader (sometimes two), and of course are read by me. The majority are accepted for publication, although quite often they undergo extensive revision - referees sometimes suggest large-scale reworking, as indeed I might myself. In the early days I returned an article to an author (a university lecturer) after I'd plastered the typescript in comments and corrections. She told me that she hadn't been treated like that since she did her A-levels ... and then very generously conceded that the paper was ten times better as a result. In my experience most authors are genuinely pleased if a reader and the editor have taken the time and trouble to assess their work seriously and with respect. There have only been two who, having taken offence, withdrew their papers in high dudgeon - and (I

believe significantly) in both cases this was after the external reader had roundly condemned the extensive use of ugly and superfluous jargon. Only one author in twenty years has complained about the published version - a grumpy objection to the perceived deficiency of the final layout. I always try to give detailed reasons if a paper is turned down, and where possible to suggest alternative publishing possibilities.

This handful of negatives is far outweighed by the innumerable positives. It is always immensely encouraging that the journal - now in its seventieth year - is consistently regarded as a valuable and enduring contribution to the local history of these islands, and also that individual authors and reviewers are so gratified and satisfied to be published there. I am also very proud that we (and here I mean the British Association for Local History) have held steadfastly to the original ideal, first expressed in the early 1950s, that this is a place where professional and non-professional practitioners can come together for mutual benefit - that the journal should and must reflect the often outstanding research and writing being done by people up and down the country who don't earn their living from history, but are engaged in it for personal inspiration and enjoyment. We have plenty of academic contributors, but we have many others whose sphere is a local history society, a heritage centre, or a continuing education course. I think we pioneered inclusivity!

My work has been made immeasurably easier by being done electronically. Nowadays, apart from one set of proofs, or two in more complicated issues, no hard copy changes hands. The immediacy, flexibility and sophistication of on-screen editing is a joy (does this even need to be said nowadays?). We can tweak and nudge text and layout to the very last minute. I'm helped by our wonderful relationship with Salisbury Printing, who have been producing *The Local Historian* since the beginning of 1995 and are consummately professional. They also - very important, this - know the journal inside out. If I need to save a page to slot in another review, I know that Fiona will be able to do it!



Jeff Childs was born in Fforest, Pontarddulais near Swansea but grew up in Pontardawe in the Swansea valley. His first degree was in history and economic history (Manchester Polytechnic) and he also holds a diploma and MA degree in local history (Cardiff University). He has recently commenced studying for a PhD with Bangor University's Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates. His professional life was as a civil servant with the Welsh Office and subsequently the Welsh Government until retirement in 2010.



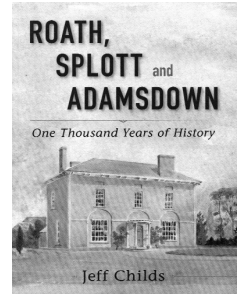
Jeff is an active member and office holder of many local and regional history groups. He was chair of the South Wales Record Society between 2015 and May 2021, when he assumed the presidency. He was chair of the Roath Local History Society in Cardiff between 1991 and 2001 (being a virtual founder member of that Society on its establishment in 1978) and chaired the Swansea Valley History Society from 2007 to 2017.

Groups flourished under his leadership, with fresh ideas that encouraged new members, different activities and enterprising publications. Jeff gives regular talks and is currently an outreach learning tutor with the Swansea

Putting his heart and soul into local history

Jeff Childs

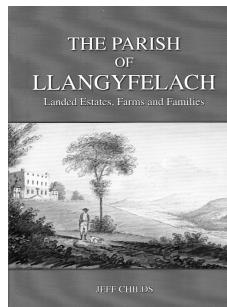
Branch of the Historical Association, by which he has recently been awarded a branch fellowship. He is also a former extra mural local history lecturer and fervently believes that all adult education courses should be affordable, accessible and inclusive.



Jeff has published several historical works covering the Swansea and Cardiff areas, his latest being *The parish of Llangyfelach: landed estates, farms and families*, which was very favourably reviewed in *The Local Historian* of January 2021. This was published in conjunction with West Glamorgan Archive Service and is based on his MA thesis. His detailed examination and analysis of changing landownership in this extensive parish has been of value to others, for example those researching coal mining in the area.

As joint editor of *Morgannwg*, the journal of the Glamorgan History Society, between 2000 and 2018, Jeff expanded the publication, increasing the number of reviews and the exhaustive recording of local history publications, often privately printed or published in obscure sources.

In addition to working with all these organisations, Jeff completed his term of office as vice chair of Shelter Cymru earlier this year, having been appointed a trustee of that housing charity in 2013. His other interests include visiting Manchester, music and walking.



With thanks to Jeff Childs, Malcolm Ranson, Paul Reynolds and Stephen Williams.

Sharing the fun and fascination of the past

Jacqueline Cooper

Jacqueline Cooper devotes extraordinary amounts of time and energy to groups and projects concerned with the history of Clavering and beyond. She was initially inspired by Eileen Ludgate who ran a history group when Jacky first moved to Clavering in the early 1980s. Professionally a local news-



paper journalist, Jacky has taken on a wide variety of other jobs over the years. She studied landscape history courses, and then enrolled with the Open University, becoming involved with the Family & Community Historical Research Society for whom she helped with projects, books and their journal. After a Masters course 'Local & Regional History of Essex & Suffolk' at the University of Essex, Jacky connected with historians in Saffron Walden and has edited and contributed to the *Saffron Walden Historical Journal* for over 20 years.

In Clavering Jacky is founder-co-ordinator of Clavering Landscape History Group, responsible for on-going research on Clavering Castle site, and for the Clavering Oral History Project. She has been Clavering History Recorder for more than 20 years, and co-ordinates the Recorders of Uttlesford History. As one of her referees wrote 'Jacky and all her

'Award' tea party on a sunny afternoon June 2021 (left to right) Jilly McNaughton, Joy Barrow, Jacqueline Cooper, Judith William-Powlett - organised by Clavering Landscape History Group

hours of voluntary effort ensures Uttlesford stands out as a vibrant beacon of local history'.

Jacky (right) and Janet Hosford, landowner of Clavering Castle, unveiling history board (in Clavering churchyard 2008) at conclusion of the History Group's castle project



Jacky's knowledge and enthusiasm are spread through talks, walks, exhibitions, books and pamphlets. These have included Maps Day, WW2 Weekend, house history visits and much more. Jacky organises two annual lecture series. She is the co-founder of the local history Facebook page. She curates the village's extensive archive and fields numerous questions from other researchers on family and local history. Events such as primary school 'archaeology days' have encouraged the next generation to become involved. As if there was any spare time, Jacky's other village activities include the Phone Box Library, Countryside Group and an allotment.

Recording, preserving and promoting local history has been Jacky's prime objective throughout and her tireless efforts were particularly appreciated during lockdowns. Jacky has enriched the lives of local people by connecting them to a shared heritage - and to each other.

With thanks to Jacky Cooper, Jilly McNaughton, Joy Barrow and Simon Coxall.



Uncovering golden nuggets of local history

Brian Hastings

Brian Hastings' passion for history began as a young boy when his Auntie Mollie gave him a Georgian penny and speculated about its possible previous owners. In her youth, his paternal grandmother, Hannah Hastings, had spent considerable time with her great-grandparents, so was able to share their fascinating memories going back to the beginning of the 19th century.

Brian began his working life with nearly 20 years with a printing firm in Sunderland, and then changed to primary school teaching after a 4-year BA Hons. degree in Education at Durham University. Now enjoying retirement, he is fully absorbed in history, long distance walking, lawn bowls and his allotment. Brian is also currently following a Post Graduate course on Local and Regional History with Lancaster University.

An early project that began Brian's research was recording memories of elderly residents of Brian's home village of Whitburn, South Tyneside (formerly in County Durham). From that he began doing genealogical research for local families, and also started collecting resources and photographs.

In 2018, Brian founded the Whitburn Village Heritage Society, and brought together a management team from a range of backgrounds and a diverse set of skills. He organises their programme, and fundraising. Events have included live music and a range of speakers.

Brian's first publication, in 1989, was *The History of Football in Whitburn*; the proceeds



(left) Mill Lane,
Whitburn. © Copyright
Richard Webb and
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creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0



from sales supported local junior football teams. Most recently, he has researched, authored and managed the publication of 'The Tide is on the Turn, New Reflections on The History of Whitburn, Volume 1. The Fishing

Community', and Volume 2, soon to be released, a fascinating history of sport in Whitburn. Brian has also been responsible for the production of four issues of the Whitburn Village Heritage Society *Journal*, since 2019.

Brian's current project is co-ordinating the development of a Whitburn Village Heritage Centre, within the premises of Whitburn Bowling Club, in association with other local organisations, i.e. Whitburn Local History Group, The Marsden Banner Group and a dementia support agency in South Tyneside.

Brian had some years ago created a Facebook presence 'Whitburn Village Family History', and he has been working with the team on the new WVHS website; both these have been of great importance in sharing and stimulating local history interest in the recent pandemic.

<https://whitburnvillageheritagesociety.com/>

With thanks to Brian Hastings, Gav Willis, Christine Buckham and Wilson McKnight.



(above) Whitburn Windmill © Copyright Jeremy Bolwell and licensed for reuse under creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0

Ann Rycraft and the completion of the York Latin Project

Claire Cross

After graduating in English Language at Oxford Ann Rycraft trained for a year at the Bodleian Library before being appointed an assistant archivist at the Borthwick Institute in York in the early 1960s, a post which she left a few years later to bring up her and her husband's two children. She then became a free lance teaching palaeography for more than thirty years to postgraduate students of the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of York and a series of many courses for the WEA in medieval Latin, medieval and early modern handwriting, medieval documents particularly wills, and food history. The Latin Project developed from one of these courses and after the drastic cuts in the provision for adult education in the 1990s the group of around a dozen mature students continued to meet on a voluntary basis in the Centre for Medieval Studies at the King's Manor.

The first topic tackled by the team was the very detailed Latin will of a fourteenth century Minster prebendary, Thomas de Dalby, archdeacon of Richmond. After transcribing and translating Dalby's will and identifying the books in his extensive library they went on to transcribe and translate the Latin wills of his associates and chronicle their careers. They published *The Testamentary Circle of Thomas de Dalby Archdeacon of Richmond, d. 1400* in York in 2000. After having explored the world of a leading Yorkshire cleric they turned their attention to one of York's richest late medieval mercantile families, the Blackburns of All Saints, North Street, once again transcribing and translating their wills which at this period were also invariably written in Latin. This resulted in the publication of *The Blackburns in York: Testaments of a Merchant Family in the Later Middle Ages* (York, 2006).

Most wills which survive for the diocese of York for this period are professionally written registered copies and relatively easy to read. Their next venture presented them with a

much greater palaeographical challenge. Before its incorporation as the York Mercers Guild in 1430, the company, which since 1581 has been known as the York Merchant Adventurers, began life as the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary in 1357, and the group transcribed the fraternity's five earliest parchment account rolls dating from between 1357 and 1367. Their edition, *Before the Merchant Adventurers: The Accounts of the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary*, was published in York in 2007. In addition to these rolls the company possesses a paper Latin account book which with occasional lapses into medieval French and English records in very considerable detail the building of the great guildhall begun by the fraternity in the year of its foundation. Having over the years transcribed and annotated these accounts and drawn up a glossary of non-Latin terms the members of the group were in the midst of compiling the index when the pandemic struck in March 2020. They were dealt a further blow in the following October when Ann Rycraft was diagnosed with an aggressive form of cancer and died on 9 December. In the last weeks of her life she had been much concerned over the fate of the edition, contacting individual members by phone from her sick bed and arranging for her notes to be placed in the Merchant Adventurers' archives. Prevented from meeting in person because of the lockdown the Latin Project rallied on zoom and under very difficult circumstances completed the outstanding work on the volume and then saw it through the press. *Before the Merchant Adventurers: Building the Hall. Account Book of the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary, York 1357-69*, came out in September 2021. It contains a gracious tribute by the group's members in Latin and English to their 'truly remarkable and inspirational tutor'.

See Heather Falvey's review on page 25

The Common Room

Jennifer Hillyard

This historic venue in Newcastle city centre has reopened following a two-year refurbishment. The Common Room, formerly known to many people as The Mining Institute, is a Grade II* listed building which has stood in the heart of the city since 1870. The building has undergone a full renovation, largely funded by a £4.7 million award from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and is now fully accessible throughout.

Researchers will be welcomed in the Alan Reece Reading Room on the ground floor in a bright comfortable space with access to WiFi, power and plenty of space for large maps and documents. Prebooking for your visit is still required due to staffing and restrictions on numbers.

In terms of the collections, the project has included massively improving physical storage conditions by extending the existing strongroom and adding custom built roller racking and a fire suppression system. The main book collection has returned to its home on the balconies in Wood Hall, with journals mainly shelved in our ground floor store. *The Mining Journal* is now housed in custom oak cabinets in the Reading Room whilst *Colliery Guardian* has been fully protected in acid-free handmade boxes and relocated to the Strongroom. The *Inspectors Reports and Lists of Mines and Quarries* are now shelved in the new Library Office adjacent to the Reading Room for easy access as one of our most frequently used resources.

Digital access is also being improved as part of the project.



Scanning and digitising items was already an ongoing priority here and, thanks to the Platten Family Fund, an A2 scanner is available for volunteers to use, however some key items were

Jen's joy at the new archive room storage



Nicholas Wood Memorial Hall. See front cover image for portrait of Nicholas Wood.

just physically too large to scan here. This project has enabled us to have the full set of Watson plans digitised offsite at Woodhorn Museum - all 686 of them. A small number were too fragile for the process however additional matched funding from the National Manuscripts Conservation Trust has enabled the conservation of these 23 plans so the whole set can be completed and available online.

The new website includes a collections search tool which will allow users to browse and keyword search all the existing scans online for the first time. An immense amount of work has been taking place during lockdown to create the metadata to make these searches possible and thanks are due to all of the volunteers who have spent many hours wrangling data in spreadsheets to bring it out of a 5000 page PDF and into a searchable database to link up to the scans. It will be an evolving process over the next few years to further improve the keywords, search terms and add map links.

The scans have been created gradually over almost a decade so this is a huge amount of material. These JPGs will be freely available to download for personal use. If the item you have found is not yet digitised, there will also be the functionality to request that it is prioritised in the scanning queue (condition, size

and other factors permitting) or the option to pay to have it scanned immediately (price depending upon size of original).

Work continues to digitise the most frequently accessed journal runs. The NEIMME *Transactions* are already available, and volunteers have been working on massive project of scanning all 200+ volumes of *The Colliery Guardian* - our most used newspaper which covers 1858-2000s. Online access offers a word searchable PDF which is far more accessible than the limited indexing available in the paper volumes. This enables searching for obituaries and biographies which were previously extremely time consuming to find.

Volunteers also continue to work on transcribing handwritten volumes from the archives, working at home with scans taken from the originals. Depending on the length, clarity and complexity of a volume, it can take hundreds of hours per volume but the benefits in terms of searchability and accessibility are huge.

The Common Room is now the holder of all of the Mining Institute collections and will continue to develop these collections to support our education programme and to satisfy user requests and enquiries. These collections are broad ranging in type and include archives, books, journals, maps, photographs, negatives, and objects. The subject matter includes items relating to mining of all kinds, across the globe plus the related industries, such as railways, which supported the development of the industrial revolution. There is more of a focus on the engineering and the technology than the people within the existing collections; however details can be teased out from within those records which provide illuminating glimpses into the lives of the people involved.

The archives include the original collections donated by engineers back in the early days of the Institute including the Buddle, Watson, Johnson and Forster collections.¹ These include notebooks, diaries, accounts, correspondence and manuscript plans. They are largely focused on the Great Northern Coalfield however do include items relating to collieries from across the UK. More recent NEIMME Presidents such as Paul Younger, Ian Day, Norman Jackson and F W Smith have also donated archival collections to keep this tradition alive.

The map collection is focused on the Great Northern Coalfield and northern Pennine Orefield area, with some North Yorks and Lancs sheets as appropriate. It includes both printed and manuscript maps and ranges from Ordnance Survey, to geological sections to underground plans.

Volunteers will be continuing to work on digitising the photographic collection, including slides and negatives but it is a mammoth task which will continue over many years. It is also almost never ending as more photographs are donated. The online system will enable off-site volunteers to work on tagging existing scans with useful terms, including utilising our volunteers with mining expertise to identify specific machinery or processes shown on the images. If you would like to volunteer with the collections in any of these roles, either onsite or remotely, please do get in touch!

If you are interested in accessing the collections in person, please visit our website for the most up to date information due to the uncertainty of Covid-19:

<https://thecommonroom.org.uk>

The North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers itself is very much alive and continues as a Royal Chartered body to offer a growing lecture programme and other events.² They have retained an office within the building and have use of the lecture theatre for their programme.

The building is open with a whole range of events, exhibitions and tours; please sign up to our mailing list to keep up to date or follow us on social at:

<https://www.facebook.com/TheCommonRoomGN/>
<https://www.instagram.com/thecommonroomgn/>
<https://twitter.com/thecommonroomgn>

You can also support the charity by using our new café bar, 5 Quarter, located on the ground floor. Open 8:30-late with food currently served 12-6pm - more information <https://thecommonroom.org.uk/5quarter/>

Rooms are also available to hire for your events from our small Meeting Room through to 100+ people in Wood Hall with full catering available. Please contact our Events and Marketing Manager for prices - discounts for charities are available.

Notes:

1. These collections were housed for many years at the Northumberland Records Office and were prefixed "NRO 3410/" The numbering has been preserved and documents can still be retrieved using these reference numbers.

2. Please see mininginstitute.org.uk for details of upcoming events.

Jen Hillyard is Library & Archives Manager, The Common Room

See page 18 for one of the large Watson plans

WIA&LHS celebrates 50th anniversary

Adam Sapic

The Worcestershire Industrial Archaeology & Local History Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. It was founded in 1971 by renowned local historian Bill Gwilliam MBE with several pupils of his Industrial Archaeology extramural evening class that he ran on behalf of the University of Birmingham.

Bill's relentless enthusiasm was a primary driving force behind the painstaking effort to study the industrial history of Worcestershire. The spirit of Bill's passion is carried on by the society who, to this day, continue to stimulate interest in, record, and study the industrial and local history of Worcestershire.

During the last 50 years, the society has delivered countless evening talks plus heritage site visits across the county and beyond, securing privileged access not usually granted to the public. The society is regularly consulted on issues concerning the risk to and preservation of local industrial heritage sites and makes valued contributions to planning processes and the recording of local sites. They are also proud to have Henry Sandon OBE and Baron Faulkner of Worcester as sponsors, both of whom are dedicated champions of industrial history.

The society has also published two papers about the history of Bromyard Road's urban development by David Attwood and the history of the Town Mill of Droitwich by Paul



*WIALHS Droitwich Canal walk
photo Adam Sapic*

Jones. Research by Dennis Williams into the Worcester Providence Works (later Metal Box) was republished in 2007, and the society has helped other members to publish books such as Miriam Harvey's experiences as a nurse in the Worcester Royal Infirmary. Many members continue to write about their interests in the society's semi-annual newsletter.

Society president Christine Silvester said 'The society is a place for all people to come and discover the fascinating history of their local county. We have uncovered a treasure trove of stories that have sparked interest in unravelling family histories, old places of work, and how our predecessors lived and celebrated life. We are proud to continue this tradition and help new generations explore their origins and why Worcestershire became the county that it is today.'

The society has recently modernised by launching a new website and online payment system. They are planning to produce an interactive map of heritage sites across Worcestershire. Ideas for other initiatives are also currently welcomed. If you would like to become a member and join in, visit their site for more info. Subscriptions start at only £10 per year.

<https://wialhs.org.uk/>

*Adam Sapic is WIA&LHS Press Officer
adamsapic@gmail.com*



*WIALHS visit to Northampton
photo Mike Hayzelden*

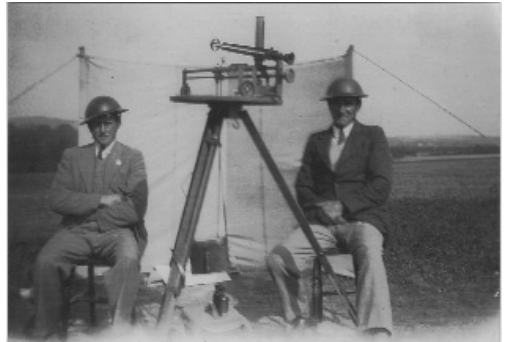
New opportunities for 'Citizen Historians'

Barry Shurlock

ONE of the huge assets of Hampshire, like many other counties, is that it is packed with people from all walks of life who are passionate about the past. In general, it is not a dead, looking backwards, nostalgic yearning for the 'good old days', but a realization that if you do not know the history of a place, or a person, or even an organisation, you are ill-informed. Equally, daily life becomes much more enjoyable when you know what is around you and can ask interesting questions and even find some answers. And it goes on - answers almost always lead to more questions.

Of course, most counties have a wealth of local societies of all kinds that are involved in questions of 'history' or 'heritage'. Hampshire alone has well over 100, or as many as 140 depending on how you define such a society. And they hold rare resources that are often difficult to trace, such as the photographs shown here.

The county is also fortunate in having a number of key organisations that operate at a professional level, providing services and facilitating exploration of the past. These include the three main record offices - in Winchester, Southampton and Portsmouth - as well as the Hampshire Genealogical Society, the Hampshire Archives Trust, the Hampshire Field Club, the Hampshire Cultural Trust, the Hampshire Industrial Archaeology Society,



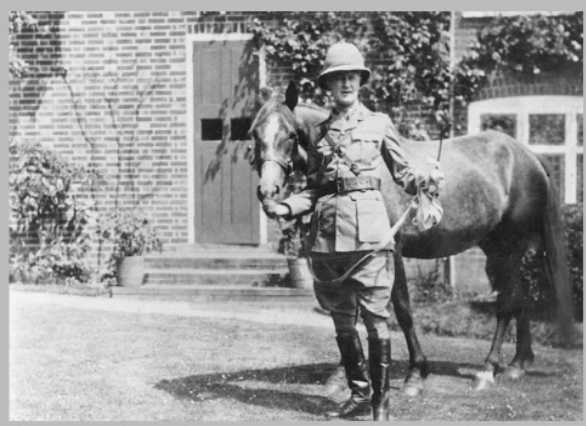
*Observation post, Longparish, 1939
(Courtesy of the Royal Observer Corps Museum)*

Hampshire Gardens Trust, Hampshire History Trust and some others.

Taken together, this 'hub' and a 'periphery' of local societies provide the elements of a co-operative model with a huge potential for many projects of all kinds. Add to this the digital revolution, and it can be seen that we are entering an era of unequalled opportunity for the advancement of local history in all its forms.

Perhaps a caveat to note is that many people with an interest in the past have a specific interest. They may only be interested in *their* family, or the place in which *they* live. They are not - at least to start with - interested in anyone else's family or any other place. This is probably an extreme position, as researchers soon appreciate that noting how someone else has tackled their family, their place, or some aspect of it, is useful in helping them to research their own patch. Even more, widening one's own sphere has its own inherent attractions.

*Artist and Army officer George Roller (1856-1941) and his pony 'Gabardine', a gift from someone who gave him work, Thomas Burberry - the founder of the fashion label.
(Courtesy of Tadley & District History Society)*



So, how to go forward?

There is an analogy here with Citizen Science, that is, the idea that professional scientists can harness the interest of others who many not be so well qualified to make discoveries that benefit everyone. It may be recording wild flowers or insects, or examining images of stars online. The principle is the same: it's very close to the homely saying 'many hands make light work'.

In terms of local history, it is slightly different, in that the traffic between the hub - the county-wide organisations - and the periphery - the local history societies - is two-way. In other words, Citizen Historians in places around the county hold information that is not held by the hub. And the hub often has knowledge and experience that is not available at the periphery - such as reading medieval Latin, archiving websites, making best use of LiDAR, as well as the wealth of material in archives.

What might this all mean?

First, now that digital records are produced by Citizen Historians in virtually every society, whether in the form of newsletters, journals or videos of meetings, these should be accessible centrally, so they can be used by anyone (subject to copyright).

Secondly, these resources should ideally have some form of tagging and gentle peer review, so that 'different answers from different sources' or 'new discoveries negating earlier work' are noted.

For example, it may be that someone is trying to make sense of local records during the Black Death. Instead of starting with a blank sheet, the ways in which others have approached the problem could be examined (standard research practice) and also relevant information trawled from other localities in the periphery.

Equally, a professional historian or student may wish to research the Black Death and want to access primary material in a range of localities. Again, digitized access to the periphery would be invaluable. And, conversely, with digital technology, information and central skills from the hub could be more easily exported to Citizen Historians in the periphery (online catalogues already go a long way in this direction).

Covid has, of course, advanced videoconferencing and Citizen Historians will surely engage more in a hybrid of virtual and physical meetings. Add to this a 24-hour digital highway of information from the periphery to the centre, and vice versa, and local history would have taken a great step forward.

What then needs to be done?

First, a database (a data lake or warehouse in the jargon) needs to be set up, perhaps in the Cloud, into which all local history societies can 'dump' material of all kinds - documents, publications, videos, oral history, photographs etc.

Secondly, some county-wide organization (or a grouping of several) needs to identify individuals with particular knowledge to tag material and assign key words. Peer review is desirable, but in a way that respects local facilities.

Finally, the central organization(s) need to set up links with Citizen Historians and discover how best to facilitate a dialogue that benefits all parties.

It is the centrality of these ideas that is most important. In this day and age, the power of search engines such as Google to answer almost any question needs to be mimicked at a county level, in order to simplify the process of carrying out research and sharing information.

Clearly this is 'blue skies' thinking, but already there are Citizen Historians at work in various subject areas (WWI, churchwarden's accounts, convict ships etc) and perhaps there are already county-based professionals with plans along these lines. It might take a decade to bring to fruition, but surely it would be worth the wait.

There will be costs, access fees, paywalls and the like to consider, but that is another matter.

*Barry Shurlock is a trustee of the Hampshire Archives Trust, a member of the Local History Section Committee of the Hampshire Field Club and contributes regularly to the Hampshire Chronicle and other local newspapers.
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'The Scutcher', a sculpture by Colin Telfer commemorating Millom's iron mining heritage, see page 15

Your Place, Your History - supporting history teaching in primary schools

Claire Dimond Mills

Did you know that all primary aged children must study their local area and its history? What a wonderful way to enthuse young people about their environment! As a local historian based in Box, Wiltshire, famous of course for Brunel's Box Tunnel, and as a parent at Box Primary School I offered my services. This has led to local history workshops and walks not just for Box school but other local schools too.

The curriculum states that in Key Stage 1, pupils aged 4-7 must look at changes within living memory and significant events, people and places in their own locality which for us is Brunel. For Key Stage 2, pupils aged 8-11 do a local history study that is either linked to one of the main history topics they study in primary school (Stone Age, Romans, Vikings and Anglo-Saxons); or looks at how national history is reflected in their locality over time; or a study of a significant event or site in their area after 1066.

Developing skills is also a key feature of the curriculum. Pupils must understand the methods of historical enquiry including how evidence is used to make historical claims, and how and why contrasting arguments and interpretations of the past have been made. It is this part that I find most fascinating and where local historians can be most useful. Teachers have little time and expertise about how to access or use primary sources, nor do they necessarily have the local insight or depth of knowledge of their area to know exactly how or what in their locality could support their teaching. I recently showed some teachers fragments of an Anglo-Saxon cross in their local church,

perfect for a discussion about evidence of early Christianity, that they did not know existed!

So how can local historians help? I do history walks round the local villages so this was an obvious thing I could do, showing the pupils key historical places. In Box there is a blind house next to the pub which always leads to

some interesting conversations about dad-dys drinking in the pub! I also develop bespoke workshops that ask the children to interrogate primary sources such as old photographs, census returns, memoirs, maps, newspaper articles to answer big questions like 'how did World War 2 impact people's lives?' or 'is the Romanisation of Britain still evident today?'. This is where you can really support their development of historical enquiry methods and have some great conversations too.

I love it when parents say to me their children have enthusiastically

told them all about what shops used to be in the village, or when I get feedback from a teacher saying how much their pupils enjoyed my workshop and how inspired they were to discover more about their village. As a local historian sharing my knowledge and exciting people of all ages is one of my main aims, so this seems to be a win/win for everyone!

If you would like to discuss how I could support you to work with your local school please do get in touch

www.clairedimondmills.co.uk

see also photograph on back cover



Beyond Notability

It took the Society of Antiquaries of London more than 200 years to formally admit women to its fellowship when in June 1920, its council invited archaeologist Eugénie Sellers Strong and the historian Rose Graham to become fellows. It was a welcome advance in recognising women's contributions to the fields of archaeology, history and heritage, but not the whole story.

Women's work had been recorded in the Society's archives since the 18th century, and by the late 19th century, they were able to study archaeology and history at university and join local archaeological and historical societies in Britain. But what did that mean in human terms? What did they contribute? And how was that represented in the archives? How can women's work be revealed in ways that ensure discoverability, accessibility, inclusivity, and encourage the creation of truly compelling, challenging and richly detailed stories about their contributions?

These are some of the questions 'Beyond Notability,' a 3 year £929,729 research project funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, will be tackling. Led by the Institute of Classical Studies at the University of London's School of Advanced Study, in partnership with the Society of Antiquaries of London and University of Southampton Digital Humanities, it will bring together academic researchers with expertise in intellectual and social history, information science and digital humanities to explore the history of women in archaeology, history and heritage in Britain.

Using the Society of Antiquaries of London archives and those of the Royal Archaeological Institute, 'Beyond Notability' will create an unprecedented openly accessible research data set of women active in archaeology, history and heritage in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The 'Beyond Notability' team will produce a range of outputs targeted at academic and independent researchers, digital content producers, cultural heritage professionals and visitors to museums and heritage sites. And to encourage interaction and build user feedback, they will release curated information as the project evolves.

<http://beyondnotability.org/>

Inspirational broadcasts

Jonathan Powell

I am currently researching the formation of the Millom and District Local History Society. While emerging from covid-lockdowns, recent research suggests a possible Roman presence in this area of Cumbria, and has reinvigorated the Society with new research-based directions.

We have unearthed some early minutes of the Society which indicate that we were formed after a series of local lectures entitled 'Looking Backwards' and held in Millom, possibly as an adult education or WEA initiative in the winter of 1971/72. This led to an inaugural meeting in January 1972 followed by a formal meeting with elections and constitution etc in March 1972. It all looked very organized and I wonder if the lectures advised on setting up societies with constitutions, elections, etc? The Millom Folk Museum was also founded in 1972, so it was a busy year here for local history!

Another impetus for the society was a series of talks broadcast on BBC, Radio 3 in April - June and repeated in October - December 1972. These were entitled 'This Was Their World - Approaches to Local History' and was written and presented by R. L. Greenall, Warden of the Leicester University Centre. The series went out on Medium Wave and not everyone in Millom could receive it. The broadcasts were accompanied by a BBC book of the same title written by Dr. Alan Rogers. This was in a similar form to his book *Approaches to Local History*. There was some emphasis on Victorian History and the more readily available sources as discussed by Professor Best's *Mid-Victorian Britain*.

These were evidently seminal productions, and I wonder if the broadcasts spurred the formation of other local history societies? Do any readers have memories or other evidence of this? There has been some suggestion that E. P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* being made available in a more affordable edition spurred initiatives in 'History from Below'. This coincided with the Victorian period slipping from memory and becoming 'history' with more available sources for research.

Comments to editor.lhm@balh.org.uk please

Living 'in carnal lust': the conference of The Northern Way Project

Gill Draper

On 23 and 24 September an online conference took place to promote The Northern Way Project on York Archbishops' Registers to students and scholars, local historians and teachers.

Archbishops' registers were among their main records in the Middle Ages, documenting a growing variety of their activities, and their possessions both temporal and spiritual. The registers are by no means dull, as the conference proceedings reveal. The project opens up their contents in two ways, by a comprehensive indexing programme and brief summaries of the entries, and digitised photographs of the originals rolls and folios for those who want to read them (in Latin of course). The website has a good introduction and should always be read - how many times have I said this to students, local and family historians I wonder?

The conference had more than twenty speakers, and all gave papers which were both erudite and entertaining. I have briefly touched on some of the areas they covered to point towards the many ways in which archbishops' registers of the northern province can be used for historical enquiry, often in conjunction with other sources.

BALH's own vice-chair Paul Dryburgh (TNA) opened with a focus on the archbishop of York and the government of England in the 14th century, using the registers of eight archbishops. He pointed to the way in which king's clerks also held secular roles such as keeper of the privy seal, keeper of the rolls, treasurer or chancellor. The clerks had the education which enabled them to fulfil these roles and their recruitment was perhaps widely considered usual and acceptable, although John Wyclif criticised it. Paul examined the recruitment of clerks and the role of nepotism in the appointment of the clerks to royal service.

The emergence of episcopal registration between the 13th and 14th centuries was reviewed by Sethina Watson. Systems of royal record, i.e. rolls, was replicated by the episcopacy because of the revolving door between king's clerks and royal officers. The earliest

diocesan records in registers concerned primarily institutions to benefices and ordinations.

Michael Spence compared the records of election of new abbots at Fountains Abbey with related professions of obedience in archbishops' registers. In the 14th century this was normally fairly routine but there was more drama and conflict in the reigns of Henry VI and Edward IV which Michael reconstructed.

Next came three excellent papers by post-graduates. Laura Green explored questions of reform by considering Archbishop's Wickwane's register of 1279-85. In particular she was keen to investigate whether reform meant better administration or enthusiasm on the part of the archbishop. She discussed the potential that the making of a record had in itself and introduced us to some folios of the register which had small sheets of parchment attached at the edge over the original entries, which could add to or change the nature of the record.

Amy Hopkins surveyed how Archbishop Melton surveyed works around the nave of York minster- the building of a chapel, the glazing of the great west window and a tombshrine- to encourage pilgrimage to deploy archiepiscopal power.

Kristy Stapley considered the record of wills and probate in Yorkshire in Archbishop Zouche's register to further understand the effect of the Black Death there. She revised the previously accepted date for its arrival from May 1349 to January 1349 since the register recorded that the plague was raging by the month of February. The way in which confessions were held was altered and new cemeteries were built. The wills and record of probate grew briefer and more hastily written in the summer months of 1349 as deaths from plague peaked.



The relationships between secular power and sacred space were opened up in detail by Philippa Hoskin in the example of the institution of Humphrey de Beauchamp to the important parish church of Harewood, and the attempt to remove him which included the sending of the sheriff to oust a lay force in the church. BALH Trustee Jonathan Mackman examined the significations of excommunication and thus the interaction between church and state which could and sometimes did enforce excommunication.

A hundred years of the nature and procedures for clerical taxation were examined by Rosemary Hayes, not only those who assessed the many taxes but also those who were obliged to collect them. These were often the heads of local religious houses; the houses unlike individuals did not die, being endlessly pursued for old uncollected taxes.

Gary Brannan, keeper of the archives at the Borthwick Institute, York, gave a fascinating and informative tour of whereabouts of the archbishops' registers over the centuries - in and around York Minster and beyond, and even briefly at Lambeth Palace. He demonstrated some entries from digitised folios, explained how the registers had been disbound in order to be photographed. Gary also pointed to sewn-in sheets attached in various places and noted that examining the hands in which they were written might enable a degree of identification of their scribes, and thus the nature of literate culture in York in the medieval period.

The second day commenced with Sarah Rees-Williams considering how the archbishops created a visual archiepiscopal history in York minster in the 14th century, and how the registers reveal the itineraries of the archbishops, travelling between minsters and manors, with the places visited tending to reduce over the century, as with the laity.

John S. Lee searched entries in the Northern Way database on hunting, gifts, gardens, income, appointments of foresters and parkers, and the punishment of poachers to give us a notable picture of archiepiscopal deer parks in northern England, illustrated by historic maps. Most of the archbishops' residences had a nearby park which was used not only for hunting but also for timber and grazing.

Pilgrimage was the search term used by John Jenkins to examine this subject in relation to politics and piety between 1307 and 1395. He found only 21 occurrences of the term and they typically related to licences for leave of absence for clerics, who were sometimes making vicarious pilgrimages on behalf of noble patrons to places such as Rome and Compostela particularly in Jubilee years.

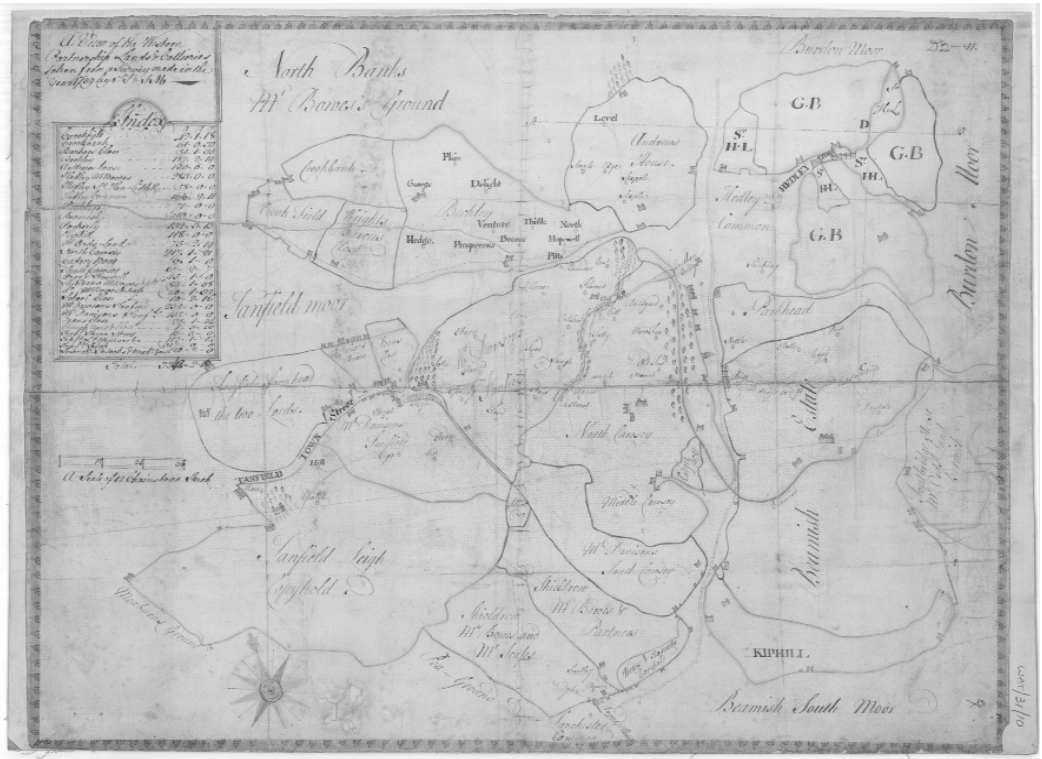
In a session entitled Borderlands two speakers explored the role of the archbishops in the second Anglo-Scottish war (1332-57), and identified the way in which the king's clerks recruited to roles in royal administration in Scotland originated largely in Yorkshire.

Register entries concerning women (wives, widows, daughters, lay and religious) formed 8% of the total between 1304 and 1405. These entries allowed Marianne Wilson to set out aspects of women's lives under the headings of behaviour, wealth, law and piety, and not just the lives of the wealthy but also the poorer. Vows of chastity formed a good proportion of the entries; they were taken by women often in later life who wished to get closer to God by taking such a vow but not one of seclusion or renouncing goods. Their husbands had to take a vow of chastity too and both vows were recorded in the register.

Papers by two local historians also made a valuable contribution to the conference in a session entitled 'Registers as a lens of local activity'. Anne Coyne compared the occupational structure, wealth and education available in Newark in the 14th century (notably an early school) with those of Nottingham, and whether these factors prompted the large number of chantry foundations in the former. Christiana Kroebel gave the audience a picture of Lythe near Whitby and investigated the absences and misdeeds of its chaplain, later rector, Master John de Boulton (Bolton) as recorded in the mid-14th century registers and posed questions to the conference about how her findings would be replicated elsewhere.

The story of Joan of Leeds, a nun who allegedly faked her own death and burial in 1318 in order to go live elsewhere 'in carnal lust', provided a focus for the last two papers and also an enjoyable 'playlet' to complete the conference. History teacher and buildings archaeologist Anna Hughes described how she used a register entry about Joan as part of mock Oxbridge Interviews and wider teaching. This story was also used by the project in its press release and can be found in *Stories in the archive* on the website *Joan of Leeds: a runaway nun who faked her own death - The Northern Way* (wordpress.com). As the project is still being completed, a second entry concerning Joan has just been discovered. Helen Watt, the project director, took us through how Joan's story and that of other medieval nuns has been portrayed through the ages in literature and art and how successfully 'fact', as in the registers, can be intermingled with fiction, or imagination, to engage an audience.

border opposite from medieval woodcuts clipart
collection www.godecookery.com



One of the large Watson plans, now digitised (NEIMME-WAT-31-10)
see article page 10

While out walking ... (11)

In the remote western end of the Somerset Levels at Gold Corner, East Huntspill, is a rectangular brick building set amidst the flat green fields and vast skies that are typical of the area (photo on back cover).

This is a pumping station, designed to maintain the water level on the Huntspill River that fed the important explosives factory nearby at Puriton. Designed by Leonard Mew of Somerset County Architects and constructed 1941-2, it is, as the new South and West Somerset edition of *Buildings of England* comments, 'astonishingly architectural for wartime'. Why indeed do we see skilled decorative, but presumably functionally unnecessary, brickwork such as this at a time of rationing almost everything? It was also an absolute delight to see a pair of kingfishers darting across the water in its shadow. JH



Julian Orbach and Nikolaus Pevsner, *The Buildings of England Somerset: South and West*, Yale UP 2014, p286
<https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/record/11683>
<https://www.somersetheritage.org.uk/record/12502>

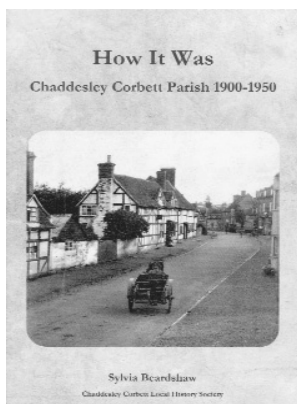
SOCIETIES



In the last issue we noted the popularity of website developments amongst societies. Groups have also been busy publishing.

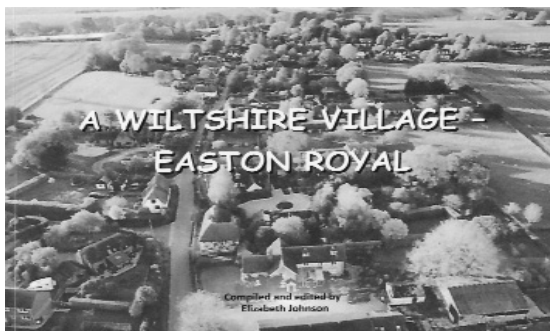
Chaddesley Corbett Local History Society in Worcestershire has produced *How It Was Chaddesley Corbett Parish 1900-1950* by Sylvia Beardshaw. The content is largely based on the memories of those who lived in the parish during the first half of the 20th century plus research based on a wide range on contemporary documents, it is generously illustrated from the society's collection of images of the area.

www.chaddesley-corbett.co.uk/history.htm



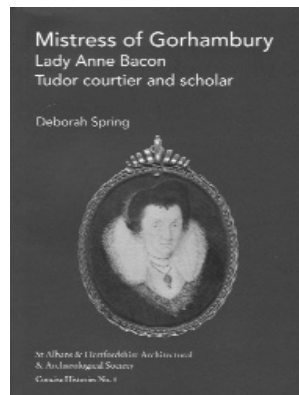
Easton Royal Heritage Group has supported *A Wiltshire Village - Easton Royal* compiled and edited by Elizabeth Johnson. Its timescale begins with archaeological evidence of Iron Age settlement, and ends in the present day, and future prospects. In between there is a variety of informative and curious subjects, all provided with appropriate illustrations.

www.eastonheritage.uk



St Albans & Hertfordshire Architectural & Archaeological Society is starting a new series of 'Concise Histories' designed to be 'professional, appealing and a pleasure to read'. The first, by Deborah Spring, is *Mistress of Gorhambury*:

Lady Anne Bacon, Tudor courtier and scholar. This remarkable, educated, woman (mother of philosopher and statesman Francis Bacon) lived through four Tudor reigns, and was mistress of the estate of Gorhambury from 1561 to her death in 1610. She was a translator of key works of the English Reformation. www.stalbanshistory.org



Troon@Ayrshire Family History Society has three new publications: a CD with over 1400 records from the Dregghorn Poor Relief Leigers 1872-1901; *Loans - an Ayrshire Village in Peace and War* by the Society's librarian Nancy McMahon; and Volume 7 of *Ayrshire News*, based on material in the *Ayr Advertiser* 1851-1860. www.troonayrshirefhs.org.uk

Clements Hall Local History Group in York has published *Nunnery Lane and Clementhorpe: Exploring old shops and pubs in York* (see review page 27). They are currently researching boarding-out (fostering) from York workhouse in the late 19th century; and also apprenticeship indentures in the same period. Research is recorded on their website at www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk. Follow links from the home page to Making Ends Meet in Nunnery Lane for a list of their research reports on this topic. The Group would be interested to hear from other groups engaged in related research. CHLHG won the Community Engagement category in the Community Archives and Heritage Group Awards 2021, for their activity during the pandemic (see links to their blog on the website).

The Family & Community Historical Research Society's conference will be held on 14 May 2022. It will be a hybrid conference, at the Premier Inn, Fosse Park, Leicester and online. The theme is 'Rocked Up; Banged Up; Strung Up'; The Criminal in the Community. Cost is £20 including refreshments and lunch or £5 for online attendance. Booking <http://www.fachrs.com/Shop/Shop.html>

Birmingham & Warwickshire Archaeological Society are planning to hold their 2021-22 lecture programme as live events, but will make every attempt to do them via Zoom if necessary. Tuesday 1 March 2022 7-9pm Dr Thomas Booth Cheddar Man and the genetic prehistory of Britain. Tuesday 5 April 2022 7-9pm David Freke Medieval graffiti of South Warwickshire churches (Warwick lecture) St Johns House Museum, Warwick. Tuesday 3 May 2022 12-2pm Jo-Ann Curtis A E Everitt, artist and antiquarian: the first Secretary of BWAS (Lunchtime lecture in the Birmingham & Midlands Institute). <https://bwas-online.co.uk>

Towcester & District Local History Society are continuing with Zoom meetings at present. Their AGM will be on Wednesday 9 March. www.mkheritage.org.uk/tidlhs

Wavertree Society has recently installed two new green 'heritage plaques'. One is on the Congregational Church in Hunters Lane and the other on the former Lamb Inn in the High Street. www.wavertreesociety.org

Christchurch History Society Journal (in a splendid new-style of production) reports on the condition of the plaques in their town. Many of these were erected and funded by the Society, and some have deteriorated seriously due to weather and other forces of damage. This is despite an agreement that the Council would maintain them. The Millennium was the spur to erect plaques, here as elsewhere. The Council published *Christchurch Blue Plaque Millennium Trail* including a map and details of 44 sites of interest. One plaque is on a derelict house which may be demolished. www.historychristchurch.org

In *Newsletter 125*, **Cleveland & Teeside Local History Society** gives advice to those considering writing for the journal *Cleveland History* in the form of 'a lockdown guide for beginners'. It consists of valuable information on sources available online for those wanting to start while access of libraries and archives are/were restricted. The next stage would be to refer readers to David Dymond's book *Researching and Writing History, a guide for local historians* (2016), to articles such as 'Developing your historical skills' (LHN 138) and material on the BALH website. www.ctlhs.co.uk

Meldreth Local History Group reports the excellent news that 'local history in Meldreth remains very much alive and well'. They have established a number of project groups, and monthly meetings will have a research focus, reporting back on progress. Their recently redesigned website continues to prove popular and is continuing to expand. www.meldrethhistory.org.uk

We always regret hearing news of the closure of a local society. At the **Cumbria Local History Federation** AGM in October it was reported that, following the decision of **Lazonby History Society** to close, an agreement was reached between the Federation and the Society for their remaining funds to be handed over to CLHF. The funds will be ringfenced until July 2026 and will be returned if the Society starts up again in that time. The Lazonby archives have been handed over to the Archive Service. All parties are satisfied with the outcome, and recommend that this agreement could be of use if other societies are closing down. www.clhf.org.uk

Increasingly print and electronic means of communication run in parallel, and each can feed off and support the other. In the last issue of LHN David Barton commented on the amount of information in the form of reminiscences being shared on a Facebook group, but also raised some of the issues that need consideration such as copyright and archiving. Two articles in the current pile of newsletters here discuss similar topics.

Writing from **Castle Hill (Maryport) Local History Group** in the *Cumbria LHF Bulletin* 87, David Malcolm, amongst many ideas and suggestions proposes that social media can be seen as a threat to local history in that, for example, it makes no attempt to evaluate or connect fragments of information, it fails to record history, recycles and reinforces standard stories, and provides a casual fix of history that doesn't require membership of a LHS. OR, it is a huge strength in that it shares a lot of knowledge, comments and information not otherwise available and allows individuals to validate or dispute their own work. www.clhf.org.uk

Paul Anderton had read David Barton's article when he responded in the December 2021 issue of *Views & News* from **North Staffordshire Historians**, under the heading that he 'rides his hobby horse - again'. The thread is to question how hundreds of contributions from people 'gripped by memories and nostalgia' become history. What do Facebook groups do with their testimonies? The first steps would be to make a reasoned listing, categorised and cross-referenced (which may or may not be chronological). This should then be backed with research in other sources to support, confirm or refute memories. Histories are constructions, interpretations and explanations based on evidence. This is a too brief precis of Paul's arguments but it is good to know we are stimulating thought and debate.

BALH Reviews Editor Heather Falvey has recently published *Pre-Reformation Wills from Rickmansworth Parish 1409-1539*. In **Rickmansworth Historical Society's** Review October 2021 she adds a note on the very detailed requests some wills contain about the location of burial that testator wanted. Some wished to be near their husband or wife, their children, their parents or their friends. Others are so specific as to help us visualise the interior of the church at the time, for example 'before the image of St Christopher'; or 'in the aisle of St Edmund'. As none of the burials Dr Falvey quotes is marked today, the wills are in effect the parishioners' memorials. <https://rickmansworthhistory.org.uk>

Medieval graffiti has been subject to a great deal of research in recent years, particularly in churches. The **Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group** publishes an article on later graffiti in barns in their Winter 2021 *Newsletter*. Names and dates, initials, tally marks and calculations are all common, but there are also drawings and patterns. All are vulnerable as barns are repurposed or even demolished. The author, Rose Lord proposes that further research and recording would be beneficial before too many are lost. www.cvbgb.co.uk



a boat in an early 20th century milking parlour near Windermere (photo Rose Lord)

VCH Gloucestershire News from **Cheltenham Local History Society** includes some picturesque quotes from the Cheltenham constable's notebook such as a messy breach of the peace in October 1577: 'Richard Land and Walter Farreuter drawed blud of Davie Harrissson and the said Davie at another time drawed blud of Richard Lane'. <http://www.cheltlocalhistory.org.uk>

'What's in a name?' is an occasional series in the **Gateacre Society's** *Newsletter*. Number 1 is 'Station Road'. It would seem not unreasonable to assume that, at least at some time, this road led to a station. But it seems not.

Consulting Liverpool Town Planning Scheme No2, it transpires that although a through road was intended to facilitate the development of suburban housing the section that linked to the station was never built, though the name remained. www.gatsoc.org.uk

Members of the Medieval Research Group at **Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society** have followed up the theme of 2021 Heritage Open Days: 'Edible England'. They looked at what the people in the manor of Ruislip were producing and eating in the 13th and 14th centuries, publishing 'Edible Ruislip' in their 2021 Journal. Emphasis was on arable farming, with wheat, oats, peas, beans and a little barley being grown. Pigs lived in the woods; there were sheep, poultry, goats and bullocks. An interesting range of wild foods was discovered: medlars, hips, nettles, mushrooms, dandelion leaves and wild garlic. Apart from the interest of the content, this article also demonstrates the type of evidence available for uncovering the daily lives of our medieval forebears. www.rnelhs.org.uk

The **War Memorials Trust** administers grants schemes for the repair and conservation of war memorials in the UK. Two examples in Shropshire are illustrated in the latest issue of their *Bulletin*, November 2021. In the North Shropshire village of **Ightfield** stands on a



small paved area backed by hedges. A grant was made to support repair and conservation works, including steam cleaning and repointing with lime mortar. An interesting feature is the way the names have been recorded. For World War 1 ranks have been included, but when the World War 2 names were added the community

decided against adding ranks. **Claverley** war memorial sits in a small remembrance garden, within the grounds of the Chyknell Hall estate. Directly under the gabled roof is a relief of two carved kneeling angels with golden halos and a sun rising between them. The memorial had to be taken apart for cleaning, timber conservation, re-gilding and a replacement shingle roof. www.warmemorials.org



LIBRARIES



National Library of Scotland: readers will be familiar with the valuable maps accessible on the NLS website. They are developing pages that provide basic research guides for particular topics. These include local history and house and building history.

<https://maps.nls.uk/guides/> While the examples used and many of the details relate to Scottish history, much of the advice, and many of the resources apply elsewhere in the UK.

The William Salt Library in Stafford, together with the **County Museum** and the **Staffordshire & Stoke on Trent Archive Service**, will be part of a new Staffordshire History Centre, for which funding has been secured. Inevitably this major development project will mean disruption to services, and visitors to all three are warned to check the current position in advance of travelling. <https://www.balh.org.uk/BRC127> (Shortened URL)

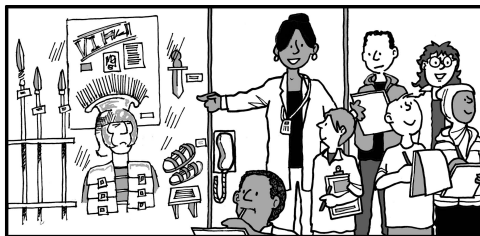
Berkshire Old & New from **Berkshire Local History Association** supplies an annual 'Berkshire Bibliography' of recent accessions to Reading Local Studies Library. The 2021 list contains 29 titles of huge variety.

www.blha.org.uk

<https://www.balh.org.uk/NCP128> (shortened URL)



MUSEUMS



AIM Biffa Award, part of the Landfill Communities Fund, gives grants to museums, galleries and cultural facilities so that they can tell the stories of less-known historical figures through the **History Makers Scheme**. Recently opened new exhibitions are a display on Lily Parr, one of football's first female superstars, at the **National Football Museum**; **Gilbert White's House**; **Milton's Cottage**; and **The Pankhurst Centre**. The latest round of grants have been made to **Elizabeth Gaskell's House** in Manchester, and **Biggin Hill's** project 'Women of the Battle of Britain: Uncovering the Hidden Histories of Women during World War Two'.

www.aim-museums.co.uk

A new book from **The Sittingbourne Heritage Museum** is *Sittingbourne Community and Leisure in the 1960s*. More than 300 images have been selected by members of the Study Group, and edited by Allen Whitnell. Plenty of memories no doubt!

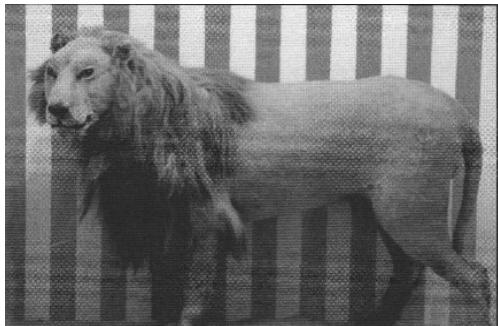
www.sittingbourne-museum.co.uk

In Dorset, the **Museum of East Dorset** (formerly the Priest's House Museum) in Wimborne has re-opened after a £1.8m 'Revival Project' to renovate its historic buildings opposite the Minster and modernise displays, activities and outreach programmes. <https://museumofeastdorset.co.uk>

Further west, the **Dorset Museum** in Dorchester has also seen a major renovation. On the Home Page of its website there is a beautiful film 'The Land', made to celebrate its re-opening. www.dorsetmuseum.org

Taxidermy was a major craft of the 19th century, and still a valued skill. The display of stuffed animals was a major educational tool, the only way of seeing what creatures from other parts of the world looked like before photography, film and travel. Many museums have 'natural history' collections that include taxidermy specimens, birds eggs, pinned butterflies, skeletons and skins, some of which have been subject to debate and controversy. However, many individual items are much

loved parts of their community. One of the most popular exhibits of the **Sunderland Museum** is Wallace, the stuffed lion (see below). He was purchased by the museum in 1879 and has been familiar to generations of Wearsiders ever since. **Sunderland Antiquarian Society Newsletter** Nov-Dec 2021 www.sunderland-antiquarians.org



Bridport Museum has a tiger, and his presence is a valued part of the discussion; as the director writes 'we should consider and challenge the past to help inform the kind of future that we want to create for ourselves'. <https://www.bridportmuseum.co.uk/tiger/>

Salisbury Museum has a family group of Great Bustards in a glass case. The birds themselves are being successfully rescued from extinction and re-introduced on Salisbury Plain. Seeing them up close is an important way of appreciating their size and beauty, before booking a visit on to the Plain where there is no guarantee they won't be more than moving dots in the distance! <https://salisburymuseum.org.uk>
<http://greatbustard.org>

archives contd

The Clock Tower is the magazine of the **Friends of Medway Archives**. November 2021 issue includes a comprehensive article marking the 70th anniversary of what became known as the Dock Road Tragedy. On Tuesday 4 December 1951 a bus ploughed into a marching column of Royal Marine cadets in Dock Road, Gillingham, killing 24 boys aged between 9 and 13. To mark the 50th anniversary, the late Prince Philip unveiled a memorial plaque close to the site of the accident, on Chatham Dockyard's perimeter wall. The majority of the boys were buried together in Grange Road Cemetery, Gillingham after a service in Rochester Cathedral. www.foma-lsc.org/index.html

photograph by Elaine Gardner opposite

ARCHIVES



The House of Fraser Archive offers a fascinating glimpse into the history of one of Britain's leading department stores. Founded in 1849 as a small drapery shop in Glasgow, it expanded rapidly acquiring some 200 different stores and opening branches in many parts of the world. The Archive is an outstanding source for the history of British design, fashion, tastes, lifestyles consumerism and consumption from the early 19th to the end of the 20th centuries. The website allows many searches, such as 'products' from Ammunition to Wool, via Biscuits, Clocks, Dressing Gowns, Kettles, Musical Instruments, Sofas and Tea. The physical archive is held at the University of Glasgow. <https://houseoffraserarchive.ac.uk>
Scottish Local History Forum e-newsletter *Clish-Clash* <https://www.slhf.org>

GEMMS stands for 'Gateway to Early Modern Manuscript Sermons'. This project (based in Canada) seeks to improve access to manuscript sermons (c1530-c17145) in British and North American libraries, to encourage research on early modern manuscript sermons and to develop an online community of sermon scholars. Local historians can research local preachers and find local sources, GEMMS offers advice and workshops. <https://gemmsorig.usask.ca/>



Aerial Archaeology Mapping Explorer from **Historic England** is a tool that displays archaeology that has been identified, mapped and recorded using aerial photographs across England, currently covering about half the country. The results of over 30 years of aerial mapping are now freely available online. Browse the map and zoom in, or search by postcode or place name. <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/results/aerial-archaeology-mapping-explorer/>

EDUCATION



My-Parish is an online community and resource for everyone interested in parishes, from the Middle Ages to the present, in the Britain and beyond. Whether you are a student, academic or museum professional, a private researcher or a member of a local society, My-Parish offers open space to share your work and experience of parish history, art, heritage and culture. All information is freely accessible at any time, and the network is free to join. <http://warwick.ac.uk/my-parish>

The Warwick Network for Parish Research runs an annual symposium and other events. In 2021 the symposium was on 'Parish, Power and Politics', report on proceedings is available on the website

https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/myparish/parishsymposia/2021politics/. Save the date of the next one - the 20th - on 7 May 2022 on the theme of 'Writing the Parish'.

Wondering what becomes of the local history work produced by students? We commend those such as the Young Historian prize winners, or the occasional recognition given to students (such as the Berkshire Local History Association scheme with Berkshire Record office and the University of Reading) but there is much hard work and original research which probably never survives beyond the end of the course. So it is heartening to read a prize-winning school essay from the 1990s contributed by a society member to the **Broseley Local History Society Newsletter**. Geraint Phillips recorded the wartime memories of Broseley resident Jack Hall, who was evacuated from Dunkirk, went to North Africa and fought in the Battle of Alamein, and then took part in the invasion of Italy where he spent the rest of the war; throughout there are personal reflections and anecdotes alongside the military details. www.brosely.org.uk

The **Centre for Kent History and Heritage (CKHH)** showcases the regional work of the Historians and Archaeologists in the School of Humanities at Canterbury Christ Church University. Amongst other events, the Centre hosts public lectures, study days and workshops on aspects of the history and archaeology of Kent. It runs a very active and informative blog, of interest more widely than only the county of Kent.

www.canterbury.ac.uk

<https://blogs.canterbury.ac.uk/kenthistory/>

Books ...

New book from BALH

Manorial Documents after 1500: A guide for local historians

Mark Forrest

The next publication in our series of guide-books for local historians will appear in Spring 2022, and we shall include full details in the next *Local History News*.

The workings of manorial courts may seem perplexing and arcane, and the records they produced can be intimidating. Medieval court rolls, in particular, require a knowledge of Latin palaeography as well as of court procedure. The majority of court records that have survived, however, date from later centuries and most are in English, offering a wealth of information about farming practices, village customs and local government, essential to understanding how communities operated in the past.

Working alongside other experts on manorial records, Mark Forrest has produced a comprehensive guide to how post-medieval manors operated, and the various types of courts that existed and the officials they appointed. He offers a detailed explanation, illustrated with examples, of the range of documents - customs, accounts, surveys and maps, as well as the court rolls and books recording manorial business - that they produced. There are case studies of how they may be used, and a bibliography and glossary. The book is timed to coincide with the completion during 2022 of the computerised Manorial Documents Register, and the celebration by TNA of the centenary of the abolition of copyhold tenure, which led to the establishment of the register to safeguard manorial records.

Mark Forrest will be speaking about this project on Local History Day 2022 (see Supplement page 1)

Before the Merchant Adventurers: Building the Hall. The Account Book of the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary, York, 1357-69

edited by The Latin Project

The Latin Project 2021 viii+107pp ISBN: 978-1-5272-9987-0 £10 + p&p;

enquiries to mas504@york.ac.uk

In *The Local Historian*, vol. 39, no. 3 (August 2009) Ann Rycraft wrote an article about The Latin Project, a group which grew out of a two-term course 'Reading Latin Documents' organised by the York branch of the WEA. Ann led that course and also the Project which went on to publish three books of transcripts of Latin documents. Transcription of the document comprising the Project's fourth book was made during Wednesday afternoon meetings led by her; sadly she died on 9 December 2020 but that book has now been published and is dedicated to Ann, 'a truly remarkable and inspirational tutor'.

The Project's third book, *Before the Merchant Adventurers: The Accounts of the Fraternity of Jesus and Mary*, comprised transcripts of the five earliest account rolls of the religious Fraternity of Jesus and Mary founded in York in 1357. The rolls cover payments, loans, pledges and gifts to the Fraternity dating from the 1350s, 1357, c.1358, 1362 and 1366-67. This fourth book is a transcript of a paper account book of the Fraternity (York Merchant Adventurers' Archives, 2/1/6) with entries dating from 1357 to 1369, none of which duplicate those in the rolls. The editorial method is similar in both publications: a full Latin transcript with detailed footnotes explaining the Latin. A parallel English translation on facing pages was considered unnecessary because the entries are quite repetitive.

The Merchant Adventurers' Hall, York, is not only a well-known landmark but also one of the most outstanding medieval guild halls still in use in England today. The Fraternity of Jesus and Mary was the precursor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers of the City of York and it was the fraternity that began building the hall in 1357. The 'Chronology' (p.84) explains what is on each folio, giving the dates covered and a brief description of the contents. About 20 different hands wrote in the book over the 12 years of the accounts. Thus, unsurprisingly, the handwriting varies, with occasional grammatical errors and phonetic spellings, but a previous description of the accounts as 'very badly written in grotesque Latin' is dismissed as harsh. It is possible that the contents of this paper book, which have been altered and amended, were originally a rough copy to be written up on parchment, but it appears that this never happened and the paper book con-

tinued to be used, perhaps because there was too much to copy out.

The book records receipts and payments, including about 2,000 separate items of expenditure. Receipts list existing members with their donations for the year and record new members' dates of entry, their fees in money and wax for candles, and pledges of future instalments. Differing amounts reflect an individual's means. Payments include those to chaplains, other clerics and the poor, a few



legal fees, rents, and purchases of food and drink for the fraternity's gatherings and annual feasts; however, by far the greatest expenditure is on construction costs, entered chronologically, revealing tools, materials, suppliers and workmen. Expenditure from May 1357 to August 1359 is totalled weekly, taking up nearly half the book (materials & tools bought and wages paid). Work resumed briefly in 1360, but more intensely from summer 1361 to spring 1362, by which time the hall was probably finished. Later building expenses relate mostly to property owned by the Fraternity elsewhere in the city.

Supplementary material includes Latin transcripts of two grants of land to York merchants, together with English translations (pp. 80-83). The text includes some English and French words, used when the scribe knew of no Latin equivalent; these appear in italics and their meanings are explained in the Glossary. There is also a list of feast days and saints' days used in dating the rolls. This is an exemplary publication. As well as providing a fascinating view of mid-fourteenth century York, it will be of use to anyone studying medieval Latin.

Heather Falvey

*See Professor Claire Cross's tribute
to Ann Rycraft on p 8*

Life in Bedford during the Second World War

Stuart Antrobus

Bedford Architectural, Archaeological & Local History Society 2021 102pp

ISBN: 978-1-73399201-0-4 £9 + p&p from The Eagle Bookshop, 16-20 St Peters Street, Bedford MK40 2NN

<https://eaglebookshop.uk/>

Over the weekend of 1 to 3 September 1939 4,617 school children and their teachers, 2,254 mothers and young children, 272 expectant mothers and 487 patients from London hospitals were evacuated to Bedford. Thus the town was involved with the war effort from the outset, principally because it was considered relatively safe: Bedford is virtually equidistant from the sea in every direction.

As well as the extraordinary disruption caused by evacuees, Stuart Antrobus's account outlines the numerous changes to 'ordinary' daily life: blackouts, sandbags, public information posters, civil defence efforts and air raid precautions. Activities of the local military defences included, on Sunday 6 September 1942, a major mock invasion exercise, with several thousand people taking part and aerial activity by the RAF. Other chapters include, 'Conscription into the armed forces', 'War work locally', 'Women's changing roles', 'Dig for victory' and 'Fundraising for the war effort'. 'Salvage and 'make do and mend'' reveals a book drive in 1943, when 95,000 books were collected from Bedford inhabitants (and 12,000 from Kempston): 15,000 were sent as reading matter for the armed forces, 300 to bombed-out libraries elsewhere and the rest for pulping for paper production. From early 1942 Bedfordshire was the site of hastily built airfields in the north of the county, leading to an influx of United States Army Air Force personnel. American military jeeps were suddenly seen in Bedford and it became a 'furlough town' where locally based GIs were allowed to visit for rest and recreation. Over the years 1942 to 1945 some 26,000 GIs were said to have been based within 12 miles

of Bedford, which, unsurprisingly, had a huge impact.

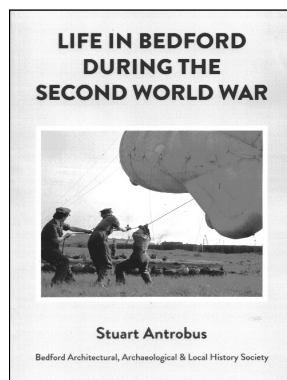
In the summer of 1941 the town had been 'invaded' by a rather different group of people: the BBC's Music and Religious Affairs departments moved there from Bristol.

Seven radio broadcasting studios were set up around the town and a range of classical and popular music programmes were broadcast to the nation, advertised as from 'somewhere in the south of England'. For 6 months in 1944 Glenn Miller (eventually Major Miller) was based there, broadcasting radio programmes for the American Forces Network.

Unknown to locals at the time, secret wartime activities were going on, including a Japanese Language School, where 225 bright 'Oxbridge-types' learned sufficient Japanese to be able to decode secret military messages and joined the code-breaking teams at Bletchley Park and elsewhere. Also Cecil 'Nobby' Vandepier Clarke, an innovative Bedford engineer, invented magnetic 'limpet mines', which were tested in one of Bedford's swimming pools. The final chapters cover bombing raids (mercifully few) and the end of war celebrations.

There are numerous illustrations and end-notes. Various appendices provide details of what was where in the town, such as military defence sites, air raid sirens and first aid posts. Among many other sources, Antrobus draws on local newspapers, council minutes, the BBC WW2 People's War online memories archive and Mass Observation diaries (now held at the University of Sussex). The text is a model for anyone wanting to research and write about their town in the Second World War.

Heather Falvey



Bridges and Mills

These two publications and their associated websites are ongoing projects and the authors would welcome comments and additions from readers.

Methodologies are explained clearly, with maps, generous illustrations, and much technical detail.

Some Recent Investigations of the Historic Stone Bridges of the British Isles

T Robertson ISBN 978 1 7399648 0 1

<https://historicbridgesofbritain.com/>

Recent Investigations into Watermill Locations and Types on 34 River Catchments

A Robertson and T Robertson

ISBN 978 1 7399648 0 2

<https://historicaljourneysalongbritishrivers.com/>

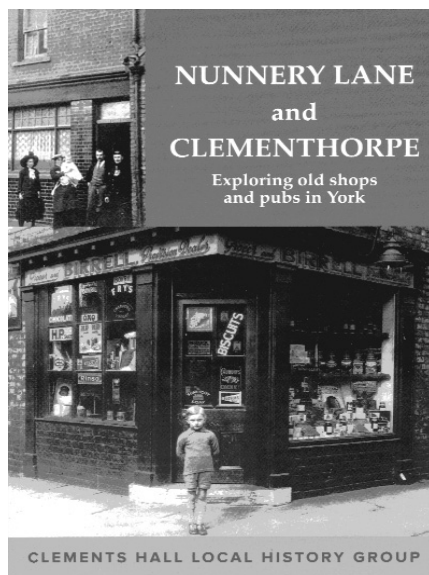
Nunnery Lane and Clementhorpe: Exploring old shops and pubs in York

Clements Hall Local History Group
2021 vi+142pp
ISBN 978-1-9996655-2-4) £8
www.clementshallhistorygroup.org.uk

Nunnery Lane, York, takes its name from St Clement's Nunnery, in Clementhorpe, which was dissolved in 1536; at the other end of the Lane stands The Bar Convent, which is now England's oldest living convent.

Although bounded by two religious sites, the most of the buildings in the Lane used to be shops or pubs, many having since been either converted to housing or demolished. Tracing the early history of the traders is not without difficulties: for example, building numbers were not always recorded on census schedules, terraces of buildings had their own numbering and the naming of parts of the Lane has changed over time.

Local delicacies are recorded, such as the homemade fishcakes from Guildford's (no. 41); there is even a poem (undated) about Wilson and Son (butchers) (no. 59); and a mini-biography of the renowned sculptor Mark Hessey (1829-1909) (22 St Mary's Terrace).



Buildings in the streets behind the Lane are also discussed. Information has been taken from census records, trade directories, maps, contemporary newspapers and advertisements in church magazines, as well as recent oral history. This beautifully produced, well-illustrated book is a model worth emulating.

Heather Falvey

Photochrom

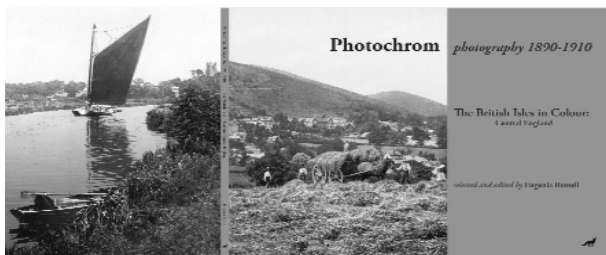
Photochrom was a process to overprint colours onto a black and white photograph, so producing what looked like colour photos before true colour photography was available. It was invented in the 1880s, and taken up by commercial photographers in Europe, including Francis Frith in Britain with whom readers will be familiar.

The technique was mainly used for postcards, so photographers concentrated in subjects of interest to tourists. These included landscapes and the seaside, historic buildings, parks, streets and railway stations. The variety of scenes make the images a potentially valuable source of information for local historians of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Publishers Lone Fox are producing a series of books to make these pictures more accessible. There are currently four volumes of *Photochrom photography*

1890-1919: the British Isles in Colour - Central England, Northern England and the Isle of Man, Southern England and the Channel Islands, and South West England and the Scilly Isles. More are planned. The images are also available as individual prints. See the website to appreciate the quality of the colour. The cover below indicates the types of pictures.

Further details and a gallery of sample images
<https://www.lonefoxpublishing.com/photochrom>



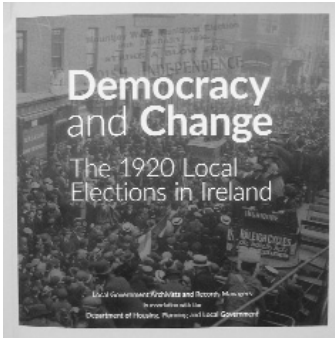
Democracy and Change: The 1920 Local Elections in Ireland

Local Government Archivists and Records Managers in association with The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government (ISBN: 978-0-95084-702-7).

Daolathas agus Athru: Na Toghchain Aitiula de 1920 in Éirinn

Cartlannaithe agus Bainisteoirí Taifead Rialtais Áitiúil i gcomhar leis an Roinn Tithíochta, Pleanála & Rialtais Áitiúil (ISBN: 978-0-95084-702-7).

This is literally a book in two halves. As the two titles illustrate, the first half is in English and the second identical half in Irish. Both halves are illustrated with the same wide variety of images, including extracts from official documents, election leaflets, newspaper reports, maps and photographs of 'notable figures'.



Since local electoral history remains a relatively undeveloped sphere of academic endeavour, a publication of this kind is particularly welcome. It provides many

insights into the contests for borough and urban councils in January 1920 and county and rural district councils in May and June 1920. These took place at a particularly turbulent time in Ireland's history with the struggle for independence at its height and with the results confirming the hegemony of Sein Fein in most parts of the country, apart from some of the counties that constituted the province of Ulster (Antrim, Armagh, Derry and Down) which had Unionist majorities. The elections were also significant in that they were the first in which a system of proportional representation, namely the single transferable vote, was

used. As explained, there was a trial run in Sligo in 1919 and steps were taken to educate the public as to how the system worked.

Particular attention is also given

to the involvement of women in the elections. As explained, 'by the time of the 1920 local elections, a degree of progress had already been achieved in terms of female representation at local government level in Ireland (p. 45). The successes of a number of notable women, such as Alice Cashel, who was elected vice-chair of Galway County Council in June 1920, are highlighted along with some of the men. The latter included some who played key roles in the military conflict, including Terence MacSwinney who 'was one of the chief organisers and commanders of the Irish Volunteers in Cork from 1914' (p. 55), served on Cork City Council, as councillor and Lord Mayor; and died on hunger strike in Brixton Prison in October 1920.

Although the publication contains a considerable amount of very welcome detail, only summaries of the results are provided, such as the number of county council seats won by each political party. These are taken from the Freeman's Journal, with a small number being amended. For the district elections there is simply a map with pie charts showing the distribution of seats in each county. It remains to be seen whether it might be followed up with studies of the individual authorities and incorporating full details of the results. That said, it is good to see recognition being given to the value of local election contests in interpreting broader historical developments.

Roger Ottewill

Special Offer!

Geoff Timmins new book, *The Built Environment Transformed: Textile Lancashire during the Industrial Revolution*, has recently been published by Liverpool University Press (further details here: <https://www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk/books/id/55740/>). Readers can get a 30% discount by using code TIMMINS30, this applies to both print and ebook. All royalties go to LUP's Open Access Fund which supports early career historians and social scientists.

BALH has published Prof Timmins' book *Exploring Local History*
<https://www.balh.org.uk/shop/book-exploring-local-history>

His next book will be on Lancashire's back-to-back houses and he is working on more local history exercises that can be done in different parts of the country using online resources.
<https://www.balh.org.uk/education-classroom-exercises-in-local-history>

see back cover image



British Association for Local History

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

Who and what we are: The Association is an unincorporated charity governed by an elected Council. Its purpose, as expressed in its charitable object, is to promote the advancement of public education through the study of local history. It aims to achieve this by encouraging and assisting the study of local history throughout Great Britain as an academic discipline and as a rewarding leisure pursuit for both individuals and groups. The elected members of Council are the trustees of the Charity. Trustees are listed elsewhere, with Officers of the Association and members of advisory committees on Outreach and Publishing (see *LHN* 142 page 36). In July 2021, as Vice Chair, I assumed responsibility for the day-to-day management of the Association as our Chair, Dr Jessica Lutkin, took a break from her leadership role. I would like to pay tribute to Jessica's vision, dedication and drive in devising, promoting and helping to deliver some exciting changes in the Association's governance and engagement activities at a time of continued flux and uncertainty, and also offer personal thanks for her support in leading the Association in the second half of this year and into 2022. Similarly, I should also like to pay tribute to the support, ingenuity and sheer hard work of my fellow trustees, officers and contracted staff in providing continued excellence in publications and a tangible boost to how the Association engages with members and non-members alike. It is therefore with great sadness that I report the passing in 2021 of Dr Margaret O'Sullivan, former chair, treasurer and trustee of the Association. As Jessica said in her 2020 Annual Report, I too am personally very grateful for the enduring presence, insight and advice of Professor Caroline Barron, the President of BALH, who has eagerly encouraged all the new initiatives of the Association - leading some herself - as the Association had had to adapt to new ways of working.

What have we done: while the effects of the global pandemic continue to wax and wane, we have maintained many of the radical changes we made in 2020. All bar the most recent issue of *The Local Historian* remains free to access online after the removal of the pay-wall last year. We continue to develop new publications. Hard on the heels of his *Reading Early Modern Handwriting*, Dr Mark Forrest has been commissioned to compile a guide to

Post-Medieval Manorial Records. This will be published in 2022. The acceleration of our digital offering begun in 2020 has not slowed in 2021. Digital events are delivered at discounted rates for individual members and members of member societies. Our Social Media Fellows, Dr Daniella Gonzalez (to July) and Megan Kelleher, PhD student at the University of Kent, Canterbury, and researcher for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, have grown our social media offering across all of the main platforms, allowing us to share new online content and engage the Association in online discussion and growth of local history in new audiences and communities. Our Digital Fellow (also to July), Dr Claire Kennan, delivered the well-received 'Local History Matters' podcast programme of ten episodes, all freely available on our website, with topics including 'National Records, Local History and the 1921 Census' (episode 1), 'Community Archives and Local History' (episode 6) and 'The Post Office, Health and Local History' (episode 10). A new series is being planned for 2022. Dr Kennan also launched in January an equally successful series of Digital Skills webinars, live online sessions to build confidence among the local history community; topics included 'Creating your local history website', 'How to get your Local History research out there', 'How to grow your social media presence', 'How to self-publish your Local History research' and 'The Pleasures and Pitfalls of researching Disability History'. This series continues apace and new webinars are being planned for 2022. Likewise, Local History Hour, our monthly online lecture series, developed in 2020 by trustees Dr Adrian Webb and Joe Saunders, has flourished to become a mainstay of local history research online, attracting large audiences. Held on the last Thursday of the month our speakers, drawn from academia and the cultural heritage sector, have introduced the key sources for a wide variety of topics such as 'Women's Lives in Early Modern Documents', 'National Mapping in the 19th and 20th Centuries', and 'Churchwardens' Accounts', and local case studies informed by original archival research. In December, the Association collaborated with the Lincoln Record Society, the Society for Lincolnshire History and Archaeology and the Survey of Lincoln to host an all-day online conference tribute to Dr Dennis Mills, one of the country's leading local historians who

sadly died in 2020. We are exploring options for similar events in the future. The pace of growth of our digital offering is now managed by the Digital Team, led by Paul Carter, our Digital Manager. The Team includes the Social Media Fellow and two new appointments made in 2021: Catherine Warr is our new Engagement Fellow, tasked with coordinating our engagement with new audiences online and (hopefully) in person, and she has led the way in creating new video content; in November we recruited Stephen Miller as our new Outreach Coordinator, who from January 2022 will streamline the management of our diversifying offer across publications, in-person events, online programme and our flagship Local History Day. Stephen steps into the formidably brilliant shoes of Dr Gill Draper, who for over fifteen years has acted as the Association's Events and Development Officer. Gill has worked tirelessly to promote the Association nationally, often writing important articles and giving research lectures at major events. The Trustees wish to express their thanks and admiration for all Gill has done for the Association. The Association has also launched its inaugural Local History Photographer of the Year and Young Local History Photographer 2022 competitions (advertised in *LHN* and on our website), encouraging submissions of photographs on local history topics and short captions that convey a personal and local meaning. My thanks are due to Susan Moore, Chair of Outreach, for inspiring the competition, and to the President, other trustees and the Digital Team for running the competitions.

As announced in the Spring edition of *Local History News*, the Association is partnering with Pharos Tutors to produce an online course in local history. The first four-week course ran in September and will repeat in March 2022 before a new course is developed by our trustee Joe Saunders. Continuing with the theme of Education, the Association collaborated with the Historical Association to devise, develop and deliver a Teacher Fellowship scheme. Led for the Association by trustee Dr Tim Lomas and Dr Claire Kennan, this culminated in a weekend residential in Lincoln in September (postponed from 2020) and is now moving towards generating new teaching resources to be accessed from our website in 2022. Plans for all in-person events are currently on hold, though we very much hope to host our Regional Conference, planned for Taunton in March 2020, in 2022. Similarly, we hope to be able to host Local History Day on 11 June 2022 as a hybrid (online / in-person) event. Another innovation from 2021 is our first annual Winter Lecture, designed as an accessible but rigorously researched exploration of a key topic. Held

this year on 9 December, the Association welcomed over 200 attendees to hear Professor Andrew Hopper, Professor of Local and Social History in the Department for Continuing Education at Rewley House, University of Oxford, to speak on 'The Human Costs of the British Civil Wars'. The Winter Lecture is dedicated to the memory of the Association's former Vice Chair and Vice President, Professor David Dymond, who sadly died in summer.

What services are provided: Our two flagship quarterly publications, *The Local Historian* and *Local History News*, remain central to the work of BALH, providing articles and information on local history across Britain, and offering a source of inspiration and guidance for best practice in local history research. The October edition of *TLH*, for example, published several articles on Black History and a welcome opinion piece by Dr Andrew Walker on the diversification of local history. Our website has developed into a forum for individuals and societies and is showcasing several new resources. The Directory of Local History Societies, compiled by Dr Jonathan Mackman, is now close to completion and allows societies across the country to contact each other and attract new members. The website now hosts a growing blog and suite of Ten-Minute Talks, short videos giving bitesize introductions to extremely wide-ranging topics. The e-newsletter (published bi-monthly) has grown exponentially to include a wide range of news and short research features for members. We continue to offer insurance to our society members to cover their activities, a service identified as one of the most appreciated in our 2020 Survey. Members can now also join the Association and pay their subscriptions by Direct Debit.

Local History Day: Due to the continued uncertainty of access to venues and the safety of in-person events, our Local History Day was held over Zoom on 12 June 2021. Professor Nick Barratt, Director of Learner and Discovery Services, Open University, gave a stimulating and provocative lecture to over 200 attendees on 'Local history after the pandemic: some thoughts for the future'. Our annual awards were also announced, and the recipients' varied achievements introduced in a video produced with several of our Trustees. Fortunately, some of the recipients were able to attend the ceremony remotely.

BALH Awards for Local Historians 2021

FOR PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENT

Anne Andrews 1941-2020, Staffordshire;
Stanley Aspinall, Lancashire; **Jeffery Childs**, Glamorgan; **Jacqueline Cooper**, Essex;
Malcolm Graham, Oxfordshire; **Alan Green**,

Sussex; **Brian Hastings**, Tyne & Wear; Jennifer Hirsh, Cambridgeshire; **Dood Pearce**, Gloucestershire; **Roger Polhill**, Norfolk; **Bernard Taylor 1948-2020**, Birmingham; **Ann Vernau**, Hertfordshire

FOR A SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Send & Ripley History Society

FOR RESEARCH & PUBLICATION

The David Hey Memorial Article 2021

John G. Harrison, "'The Drifty Days': a Climate Crisis of 1673-4", *Scottish Local History* (no.107, Autumn 2020) [winner, long articles]

Victoria Downey, 'Reforming music at Durham Cathedral: the musical agendas of William Whittingham & John Cosin', *Durham County Local History Society Journal* (no.84, June 2020)

Martin Stilwell, 'Industries in Kew and North Richmond in the First World War: a hidden and surprising history', *Richmond History* (no.41, 2020)

Dianne C. Barre, 'Mrs Hervey makes a flower garden', *Acton Historian* (no.70, November 2020)

Malcolm Linfield, 'The History of the Worthing Tomato', *West Sussex History: Journal of the West Sussex Archives Society* (no.88, Autumn)

Val Dudley, 'Medieval life as revealed in Coroners' Rolls, *Suffolk Review* (new series 74, Spring 2020) 23-28 [winner short articles]

Tracey Logan and Richard Szwagrzak, 'Reverend Dale and the Glebe estate (1870-1885)', *Brentford & Chiswick Local History Journal* (no.29, 2020)

Jean Davidson, "'A room of one's own': Women's pioneer housing in interwar Putney", *Wandsworth Historian* (no.110, Autumn 2020)

Jacqueline Cooper, 'The rat-catcher Law family of Clavering', *Saffron Walden Historical Journal* (no.39, Spring 2020)

Jane Lilley, 'Newdigate churchyard fence', *Newdigate Local History Society Magazine* (no.105 April 2020)

Conclusion

The Trustees believe that the Association continues to run effectively and according to the constitution and rules of its charitable status. Constant attention is being given to find ways and methods for the Association to function more effectively in reaching a larger constituency of people interested in local history. In all these endeavours the Trustees are grateful to all those who support BALH whether on paid contracts, on committees or as volunteers without whom the Association could not function.

Dr Paul Dryburgh, Vice Chair BALH

BALH online

Paul Carter

Here at BALH, we were already taking steps to develop our online output well before the pandemic hit, as with many other organisations, our plans were accelerated and enhanced dramatically during 2020, supported by an expanded Digital Team.

One positive factor amidst the upset and disruption caused by Covid, has been the acceptance and willingness of so many to learn new

technologies; most noticeable in the audience numbers at our online events.

Two years on, we're still working hard to produce engaging content, supporting local history in a variety of formats. Our website www.balh.org.uk, contains the latest from BALH, our events, and access to digitised print publications.

Try www.balh.org.uk/search to search content in our archive, as well as other sections of the website. Our blog, www.balh.org.uk/blog contains articles on interesting local history themes, with new content added regularly.

Ten-minute talks, introduced during the pandemic, has short talks on various topics. (www.balh.org.uk/ten-minute-talks).

Our e-newsletter is published regularly during the year and is an excellent way to keep up



BALH Digital team digitalteam@balh.org.uk

Website Ten-minute talks Social media
Blog Webinars E-newsletter Podcasts

 Paul Carter
Digital Manager

 Megan Kelleher
Social Media Fellow

 Catherine Warr
Engagement Fellow

to date with latest content and events from BALH. It's sent to members, but anyone may use the Subscribe button on the website to receive a copy.

See www.balh.org.uk/publications for past editions.

It's heart-warming to see so many joining our online webinars, led by our monthly flagship event, Local History Hour (see below), where two speakers give talks on related themes. In addition, we broadcast highly informative talks on local history and digital skills themes. See our upcoming programme at www.balh.org.uk/events. While our primary event, Local History Day, had to move online for the past two years, we're planning an innovative hybrid conference for 2022, welcoming both a physical and online audience (see Supplement page1).

We're working on a second series of our Local History Matters podcast, but the first series,

which covers a broad range of subjects is available at <https://www.balh.org.uk/podcast>.

What we can do for you

Online promotion means social media and we're working hard to promote local history on these platforms. That's where you come in. We'd love to connect with you on social media, whether you're an individual member or a society, enabling us to promote you.

Contact Megan Kelleher, socialmedia@balh.org.uk or message her on any of our channels.

Do you have a story to tell? A research project of interest to others? Our blog and ten-minute talks are the perfect platform. Please contact us at digitalteam@balh.org.uk. We look forward to hearing from you.

Paul Carter is Digital Manager at BALH

Local History Hour

Joe Saunders

Settling down to a good local history talk during the long winter nights is one of life's great joys and we hope that you have been suitably informed and entertained so far this winter. In November and January our own Local History Hour has brought to you fascinating research and advice on Churchwardens' Accounts and Nonconformity with local studies from Surrey, Essex and Yorkshire. For those who missed the talks or would like a reminder of them we have been providing summaries on the BALH blog, including reading suggestions and links to resources.

As we move toward spring Local History Hour enters a second year and we have a very exciting schedule to bring to you. In February we will be joined by Dr Helen Frisby and Dr Brian Parsons with 'From Front Parlour to Funeral Parlour: English traditions of death and burial'. In March we have Susan Moore and Sue Swalwell on 'The Magic of Chancery' with a case study from 18th century Whitby, Yorkshire. In April Dr Rhiannon Sandy and Stephanie Brown will be discussing 'Expectation versus reality in medieval legal records' with examples from York and Bridgwater. In May we welcome Dr Cheryl Butler and Dr Jackie Wilkinson to talk about 16th century women with a study using the records of Winchester Consistory Court. You can find details of these talks on the Events page of our website.

Some information for those who are yet to join us. Local History Hour runs on the last Thursday evening of each month inviting two guests to speak from different perspectives on a given theme relating to local history. We use Zoom Webinar where attendees sign up in advance, and attendance is free to individual members of BALH, with a £5 charge for non-members. Throughout our digital output we offer benefits to the members of our Society members. For Local History Hour, the charge for these will be £3. 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. 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. At the end of the hour we'll have time for the submitted audience questions.

Please look out for announcements of these talks and others here in *Local History News*, our e-newsletter, website and social media accounts. We hope to see many of you there.

<https://www.balh.org.uk/events>

Delights of Hampshire

Alan Crosby

In October, I led a history study tour based in Portsmouth, with a fascinating variety of sites to visit, explore and interpret. Some of us had been to the Weald and Downland Museum before, but its splendid collection of reconstructed buildings from the late medieval to the late 19th century always repays further inspection. On a brisk bright day, the trees turning gold, it looked very fine. I'm sorry to say that a few of the party were diverted from vernacular architecture and social history by watching the filming of a Christmas edition of 'The Repair Shop', such is the power of the small screen.

Others relished our rainy visit to Butser Ancient Farm, with its archaeologically-correct replicas of domestic buildings from the palaeolithic to Anglo-Saxon - shockingly, there was much relief that we arrived just as a hundred primary school children were boarding their three buses! Shown around by a super-enthusiastic Australian archaeologist, we became lightly kippered by the smoke of open-hearth fires in huge conical or rectangular houses, and appreciated why our distant forebears might have had respiratory conditions and tanned, leathery skins. Questions

abounded, some people being intrigued by the (nightmare?) prospect of living communally in a great circular hut with one's extended family.

At Portchester Castle the sun was warm, the immense Roman walls were deemed appropriately impressive, the Norman castle in the corner was much enjoyed (up and down the stone and wooden staircases for those who cast aside the impedimenta of sticks, poles, bags and rucksacks), and we had a short sea-weed-scented walk around the exterior, with Portsmouth Harbour sparkling and glittering, and the cranes and towering warships of the naval dockyard looking dramatic in the distance.

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard costs an arm and a leg (a suitably Nelsonian analogy?) but we spent a full day there, and nobody was disappointed. I'd previously hyped up the Mary Rose exhibition because to me it is everything that the superlatives claim - the superb and fascinating museum section, so meticulously researched, described and displayed, being merely the prelude to the breathtaking sight of the ship itself, housed in its vast airy space. When I visited on my own earlier in the year the usually somewhat sceptical me was, for once, lost for words. Most of the group had a similar reaction. Astonishment.

But an unexpected highlight of the four-day stay was Old Portsmouth and, especially, the cathedral of St Thomas Becket. I suspect that nobody knew that Portsmouth even has a cathedral (in fact it has two, as there is also a Roman Catholic one) and certainly none had ever been. It must be the strangest of our Anglican cathedrals, a parish church which was only elevated in 1927. There is a most extraordinary architectural mish-mash. A fine medieval chancel at the east end joins a curious post-1660 rebuilding in the middle (itself modified in the 1930s when major expansion to befit its enhanced status was being implemented, only to be suspended on the outbreak of war). The cathedral was miraculously unscathed as bombs rained down on the surrounding streets of Georgian houses, but after the war was a forlorn sight, the unfinished and



unbuilt west end being closed off by a temporary brick wall that lasted forty years. Finally, triumphantly, the west end was completed during the 1990s in a modern interpretation of the principles of Gothic architecture, a masterly exercise in creating a cool, light, calming space that blends seamlessly with the older portions.

We had two excellent guides to show us round, but I was intrigued to know how this complexity might be explained. No need to worry. Our guide went across to what looked like a pile of building blocks. Was this the chil-

dren's corner? No, it was a model of the cathedral made up of brightly-coloured chunky wooden sections - red, green, blue and yellow, each representing a different architectural period. She knocked it down and then, as she talked about the history of the building, she built it up, stage by stage, before our eyes. So simple, so obvious, and startlingly effective - we were captivated. I've never seen that basic learning aid used elsewhere, but for clarity and visual impact it was unbeatable. Much praise, therefore, to Portsmouth Cathedral for such an imaginative way of demonstrating its unusual and often troubled history.

BALH's new Outreach Coordinator

Stephen Miller introduces himself

Despite a slow start (I dropped History at school in favour of Geography) I have been able to build a career in the heritage sector over the last 13 years. I have worked for organisations such as the Museum of Lancashire, the Wordsworth Trust, the Geffrye Museum, Westminster Archives and the London Metropolitan Archives. I am currently part of the Barnsley Libraries management team and work as a freelance heritage consultant.

Throughout my career my focus has been public engagement and community outreach, working with local people to uncover their history and present that to the widest community possible. I believe local history has the power to create positive change for individuals and communities. I also have a passion for forgotten, overlooked or hidden histories and a specialism in researching LGBTQ+ stories. I was part of the Outing the Past team at Lancashire County Council, have spoken at the National Festival of LGBT History and delivered several history projects with the LGBTQ+ community.

I am a generalist in my research interests but with a focus on the lives and stories of ordi-

nary working people. I am currently nearing the end of my MLitt in Local and Family History at the University of Dundee. My dissertation, supervised by Nick Barratt, is a study of a farm in Marsden, West Yorkshire (where I also live), and its relationship with the local manor, industrial development and decline. My deadline is July 2022 and I have ambitions to do more with the research and potential wider publication.

I will be starting formally with the BALH in January 2022 and look forward to working with the trustees, committee members, officers and members. I think the BALH is in a very strong position thanks to the hard work of many and I hope to be able to bring a fresh perspective and some new ideas as the Outreach Coordinator. I would love to hear from any members with ideas for outreach projects, ways we can reach new audiences or what existing members would like to see. I can be contacted directly by email on

outreach@balh.org.uk

see photo on back cover

Notes News Issues

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

With immediate effect, the postal address for BALH has changed to

**BALH Registered Office,
Ground Floor, 4 Victoria Square,
St Albans AL1 3TF**

Other contact details remain the same, email: admin@balh.org.uk, telephone: 01625 664524

Local History Day and other events 2022

Next summer you can attend Local History Day in person, or online. If you are happy to travel to London we will be delighted to see you, alternatively please do join us from your home. Further information can be found on page 1 of the Supplement, and booking details will be available on the website before long. Many groups are returning to 'live' meetings, and others are continuing via 'Zoom'. We will continue to review all our activities, and it may well be that a 'hybrid' approach will be the most sensible strategy for some time to come. We haven't forgotten the postponed event in Taunton!

New Year Honours

Congratulations to everyone connected with history, and especially local history, who has been recognised in the 2022 New Year Honours list. This includes Dr Robert Perks, Lead Curator Oral History and Director of National Life Stories, British Library, 'for services to Libraries, to the National Archives and to Oral History particularly during Covid-19'; Doreen Agutter 'for services to the history of Meriden and Warwickshire'; and Gerald Millington 'for services to Local History in Devon and Hertfordshire'.

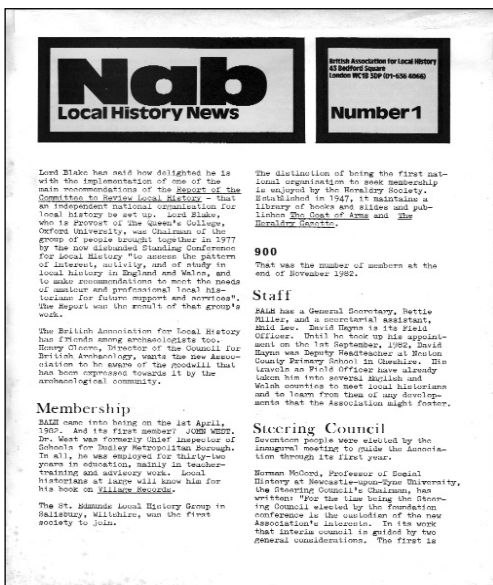
Royal British Legion centenary

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the request for information in *LHN* 138 p 13. There are fascinating details from RBL branches around the country here:

<https://www.britishlegion.org.uk/about-us/our-centenary/telling-our-story/branch-history>

NAB 1

The first issue of *Local History News* sadly isn't dated, but must have been sent to members at the end of 1982 or early 1983. And it doesn't explain why it is called 'Nab'. When I asked on the website if anyone remembered why, Janet Brown, a founder member of BALH from Northumberland, replied as follows: 'The name of Nab for the newsletter was created by the first General Secretary of the newly formed BALH, Bettie Miller. It was very early days and she was full of enthusiasm. She didn't ask anyone, as I remember, simply produced the newsletter. The later more formal committee were puzzled as to what NAB meant. Was it an acronym? No, it was simply to 'nab' people's attention. I remember her explaining it'. From issue 6 onwards it is simply *Local History News*.



1921 Census

By the time you read this issue of *LHN* the 1921 census will be accessible.

First, you are recommended to read Joe Saunders' blog on our website 'The 1921 Census: a potted history'. There are useful links to other relevant material too.

<https://www.balh.org.uk/blog-the-1921-census-a-potted-history-2021-12-11>

BALH Officers and Committees

President: Professor Caroline Barron

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

Board of Trustees 2021-22:

Dr Virginia Bainbridge
Dr Katie Bridger
Dr John Chandler
Professor Claire Cross
Dr Paul Dryburgh (*Vice-Chair*)
Professor David Killingray
Dr Tim Lomas
Dr Jessica Lutkin (*Chair*)
Dr Jonathan Mackman
Ms Susan Moore
Mr Joe Saunders
Dr Jack Southern
Dr Winifred Stokes
Dr Iain Taylor (*Treasurer*)
Dr Adrian Webb

Advisory Committees:

Outreach: Ms S Moore (*Chair*), Dr V Bainbridge, Dr K Bridger, Mr Chris Denley,
Ms J Golding, Dr D Gonzalez, Dr T Lomas, Dr J Lutkin, Dr J Mackman, Ms H Palmer,
Mr J Saunders, Dr J Southern, Dr I Taylor, Mrs M Thompson
ex officio: Mr P A Carter (Digital Manager), Mr S Miller (Outreach Co-ordinator)
Ms M Kelleher (Social Media Fellow), Ms C Warr (Engagement Fellow)

Publishing: Dr J Chandler (*Chair*), Prof M C Cross, Dr D Dixon, Dr P Dryburgh,
Dr M Forrest, Prof D Killingray, Ms J Owen, Dr W Stokes,
Dr K Thompson, Dr N Tringham, Dr M Winstanley
ex officio: Dr A Crosby (Editor *The Local Historian*), Dr H Falvey (Reviews Editor),
Dr J Howells (Editor *Local History News*)

Editor, *The Local Historian*: Dr Alan Crosby

Reviews Editor: Dr Heather Falvey

Editor, *Local History News*: Dr Jane Howells

Digital Manager: Paul A Carter

BALH Social Media Fellow: Ms Megan Kelleher

BALH Engagement Fellow: Ms Catherine Warr

Outreach Co-ordinator: Mr Stephen Miller

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 REGISTERED OFFICE, GROUND FLOOR,
4 VICTORIA SQUARE, ST ALBANS AL1 3TF
01625 664524 admin@balh.org.uk**



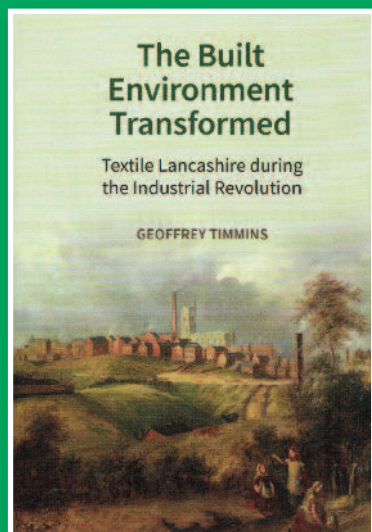
Stephen Miller, new BALH Outreach Co-ordinator (see p 34)



Local history in primary schools (see page 14)



Huntspill River, Somerset (see page 18)



Geoff Timmins' new book (see page 28)



Local History News

NUMBER 142 JANUARY 2022

www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

**British Association for Local History
LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2022
Saturday 11 June 10.30 am – 4pm**

In-person: **Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, Holborn, London. WC1R 4RL**

Online: **via Zoom** (*link on registration*)

We are delighted that
Janina Ramirez
will be the special guest speaker



(photo © Juliana Johnston)

The morning talk on Post-Medieval Manorial Records
will be given by Mark Forrest
(see the new BALH Publication page 24).

This will be followed by the BALH AGM and the announcement of the
Local History Photographer of the Year

After the lunch break BALH Awards for Local Historians 2022 will be presented,
before Dr Ramirez's talk at 3 pm.

**Booking details will be on the BALH website shortly
www.balh.org.uk/events**

At the time of writing, programmes of meetings and other events arranged by local history organisations are still uncertain through 2022. 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

British Association for Local History

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 12 June 2021, 13.30

MINUTES

[The Honorary President, Professor Caroline Barron, in the chair]

1. **Apologies for Absence:** None were forthcoming. A total of 243 members and non-members attended the Meeting.
2. **Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12 September 2020:** The minutes of the 2020 Meeting were agreed as a true record, with no matters arising.
3. **Chairman's Report:** Dr Jessica Lutkin noted that this has been a defining year and expressed her thanks to the officers, trustees and committee members. Radical changes have been made in efforts to respond to the global pandemic. The first major change was to remove the website paywall so that all but the most recent *The Local Historian* and *Local History News* are available free of charge. In an attempt to engage a wider community of local historians, the Association created two fellowships to drive online engagement: Dr Daniella Gonzalez, Social Media Fellow; Dr Claire Kennan, Digital Fellow. With the Web Manager Paul Carter, this Digital Team has prepared and facilitated a huge number of online events. The new e-newsletter, developed by Dr Jonathan Mackman, is now issued twice monthly to members. Trustees Dr Adrian Webb and Joe Saunders developed Local History Hour, a series of monthly online lectures now engaging hundreds of viewers.

In terms of the Association's administration, we have continued to enjoy a fruitful working partnership with Kingston Smith Association Management (KSAM); with their support we have developed a Direct Debit means of payment to join the Association.

The pandemic forced the cancellation of our planned first regional conference in Taunton and 2020 Local History Day, the latter being replaced by a special lecture delivered by Professor Catherine Clarke, Chair in the History of People, Place and Community at the Institute of Historical Research, on 'What is History?' in September 2020. The Annual Awards were announced online, and recipients can be found in *Local History News*. The online Survey was launched in November 2020, later than planned.

The Association's flagship Local History publications (*The Local Historian* and *Local History News*) remain central to all we do. They continue to offer a wealth of inspiration and guidance for best practice in local history. During the year in review a new edition of *Internet Sources*, ed. Alan Crosby, was published. On the Association's website members can now access an almost comprehensive directory of Local History Societies (compiled by Dr Jonathan Mackman), which is nearing completion; the website also includes an increasingly large volume of event information and news features as well as the Ten-Minute Talks online presentations, pioneered by Dr Gill Draper, the Events and Development Officer.

The trustees believe that the Association continues to be run according to our charitable objects. Dr Lutkin expressed her gratitude to all who support BALH whether on contracts, on committees or as volunteers.

4. **Annual Report and Accounts for 2020:** Dr Iain Taylor introduced the financial statement for the year ending 31 December 2020. Total income was almost identical to 2019, at just under £127,000. The majority of revenue came from subscriptions, which are down slightly on 2019. Income from Local History Day collapsed but some income was retrieved from increased book sales.

Expenditure fell 6%, mainly due to lower website, print and stationery costs. Conversely, the investment in new Digital and Social Media Fellows, while increasing overall costs, is undoubtedly introducing the BALH to a younger, more tech-savvy audience.

Total net assets are now £121,486 (up from £108,513). The trustees have therefore decided to spend in a calculated, judicious way to enhance the benefits of membership; this will include the Teacher Fellowship

programme to begin in September 2021. In the current financial year, the Association continued to do well in terms of membership, though it has seen a slight fall over the year net (with an increase in student membership).

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

5. Officers and Trustees of the Association

Trustees: Dr Virginia Bainbridge, Dr Katie Bridger, Dr John Chandler, Professor Claire Cross, Dr Paul Dryburgh, Professor David Killingray, Dr Tim Lomas, Dr Jessica Lutkin, Dr Jonathan Mackman, Ms Susan Moore, Dr Jack Southern, Dr Winifred Stokes, Dr Iain Taylor, Professor Geoffrey Timmins, Dr Adrian Webb

Professor Geoffrey Timmins has offered his resignation as a trustee. In his place Joseph Saunders was proposed.

The members of the board of trustees were elected en bloc with the noted change: proposed, David Griffiths; seconded, Robert Smith.

Officers: Dr Jessica Lutkin, Chairman; Professor David Killingray, Vice Chairman; Dr Iain Taylor, Treasurer; Dr John Chandler, Chairman of Publishing Committee; Ms Susan Moore, Chairman of Outreach Committee

The Chairman noted that Professor Killingray is standing down as Vice Chairman. Dr Paul Dryburgh has been nominated in his stead: proposed, Angela Blaydon; seconded, Janet Owen.

6. Membership subscriptions: the meeting agreed there would be no changes to subscriptions for 2022.

7. Survey: Dr Lutkin announced a summary of results of the recent online survey, the first since 2014, launched in November 2020. It was open for five months and responses were received from over 700 people representing individuals, society members, institutions and non-members. The Survey was divided into seven key sections covering the key functions of the Association and the present and future state of local history. 74% of respondents were members of the Association. The majority of respondents expressed strong satisfaction with printed content, though there has been a growth in online engagement. Both key publications have a robust, loyal following. Concerns were raised about moving away from print publications in favour of unique content on social media. Dr Lutkin reassured attendees that this is not the intention but we do wish to diversify our engagement streams. In terms of events, respondents leaned strongly towards online events with a robust following for continuing in-person activities. Local History Day 2022 will hopefully be in person but will also be live-streamed. In terms of Education, the majority of respondents are retired or current educators, but only around 10% of respondents use our online materials, so we will aim to develop fresh content particularly from the Teacher Fellowship programme. The vast majority of members who responded felt their membership gave good value for money.

Respondents provided extremely detailed answers to questions around the future of local history: foci included embracing digital methods and skills, succession planning within societies and the luxury of time to complete projects countered by brain fog and lack of focus in the virtual environment. The lack of personal interaction during the pandemic has had a huge impact on activities even for those societies who can engage online. The future of the Association will aim to combine the best of the approaches pioneered during the pandemic and those traditional publications and engagement approaches of longer standing. The main message emerging from the Survey is the liveliness of local history communities and how innovative people are.

8. Independent examiners of the Association's accounts: Dr Taylor proposed that Moore Stephens (South) LLP be appointed independent examiners of the Association's accounts. Seconded: Nick Turner; Robert Smith.

9. Any other business: There were no further matters of business. However, following the meeting there was a video presentation to the recipients of the Annual Awards (Personal Achievement and Publications and Research). Details of the recipients have been printed in *Local History News*.

The Annual General Meeting concluded at 14.10.

British Association for Local History

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

In-person: Conway Hall, 25 Red Lion Square, Holborn, London. WC1R 4RL

Online: via Zoom (link on registration)

Saturday 11 June 2022, 12.15pm (*provisional*)

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 12 June 2021, and matters arising
3. Report from the Chair of Trustees
4. To consider the Annual Report and Accounts for 2021
5. To elect Members of the Board of Trustees: Dr Virginia Bainbridge, Dr Katie Bridger, Dr John Chandler, Professor Claire Cross, Dr Gill Draper, Dr Paul Dryburgh, Professor David Killingray, Dr Tim Lomas, Dr Jonathan Mackman, Ms Susan Moore, Mr Joe Saunders, Dr Winifred Stokes, Dr Jack Southern, Dr Iain Taylor, Dr Adrian Webb
6. To elect Officers of the Board of Trustees
7. Membership Report and Subscriptions
8. Fellowships and Outreach Coordinator
9. Local History Survey Update
10. Teacher Fellowship Programme Update
11. Independent Examiners of the Association's Accounts
12. Any Other Business notified by 11 May 2022

Please note that the full AGM Minutes (item 2 above) and the Annual Report and Accounts (item 4 above) will be available on request from 20 May from BALH Office (address below).

Nomination forms (item 5 above) are available from BALH Office. Completed nomination forms should be returned to the BALH Chair at BALH Office no later than 11 May 2022. Matters of any other business (item 12 above) must be received in writing by email or post by 11 May 2022.

BALH Registered Office, Ground Floor, 4 Victoria Square, St Albans AL1 3TF
01629 664524, admin@balh.org.uk

*The draft Trustees' Report for 2021 (item 3) is printed here in **Local History News** 142 page 29.*