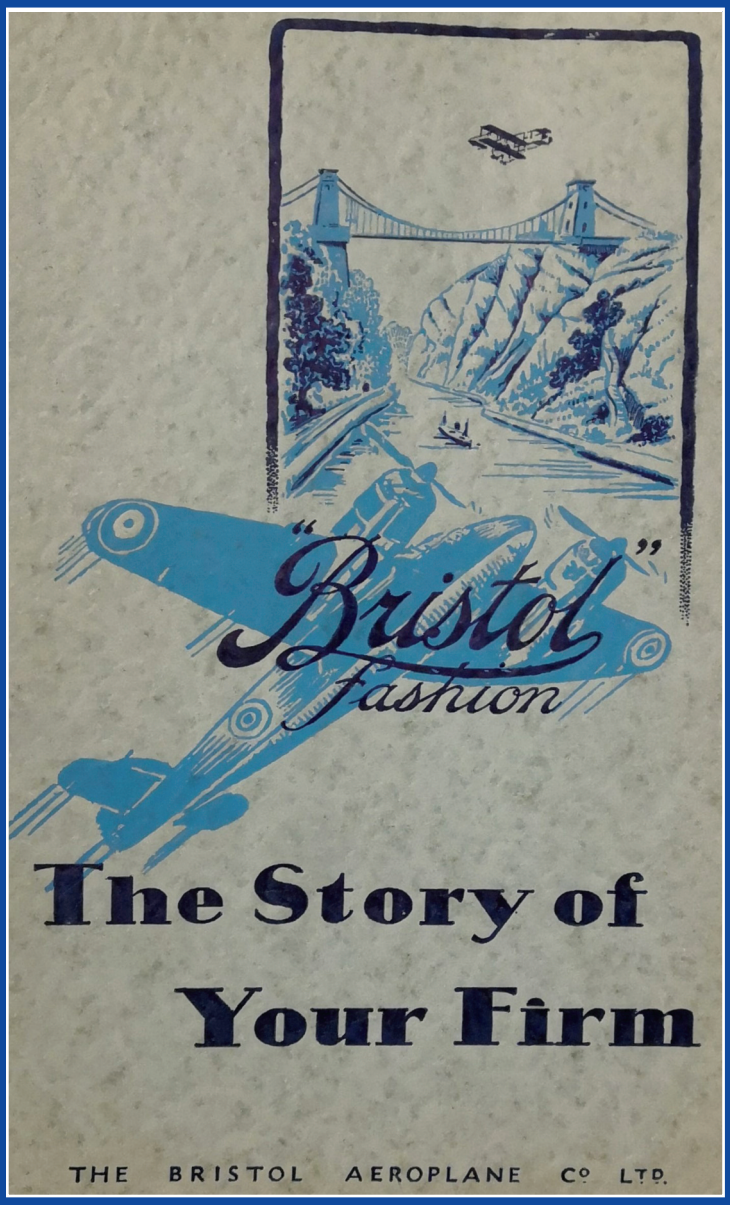
Local History News

Number 144 Summer 2022 *www.balh.org.uk*



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ISSN 0969-3521

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

BALH Reviews Editor
Dr Heather Falvey
119 Winton Drive
Croxley Green
Rickmansworth WD3 3QS

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7 St Mark's Road
Salisbury
SP1 3AY

Front cover

Detail from Pieter Brueghel the Younger, The Payment of Tithes, between 1617 and 1622, (Bonhams, Wikimedia Commons)

Used on the front cover of BALH's new book Manors and Manorial Documents after 1500 (see Supplement page 4 and our website)

Local History News

MAGAZINE OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

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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

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A fascinating jotting pad

Alan Crosby

Many years ago, I collected and transcribed the memoranda and jottings which I came across while doing genealogical research in Norfolk parish registers. Those were the days - original registers, turning the parchment leaves and smelling the scents of antiquity! I was fascinated, and still am, by the circumstances in which these annotations were written - vicars and rectors who were prying and censorious about their parishioners and recorded their faults and misdemeanours; or who were conscious of a sense of history and sensed that the register they were compiling would be read in generations to come; or who were charitable and warmly sympathetic to the human beings whose stories they noted; or who were simply bored and used the register as a jotting pad, a commonplace book.

More recently, Steve Hobbs has done a much more impressive such exercise for Wiltshire. His *Gleanings from Wiltshire Parish Registers* was published by the Wiltshire Record Society in 2010, and brings together many hundreds of notes, memoranda and annotations on a tremendous range of subjects. I was lately browsing through my old Norfolk notebook, and as always was captivated by the glimpses into past tragedies and personalities, and the rich social and cultural history that the entries reveal. Sometimes the incumbent is clearly a delightful man:

'Rebecca Hubbard Widow aged 90 by ye Parish who officiated as Clerk of the Parish beyond ye memory of any one living till within six months of her death, her life was a lesson to mankind, happy in a state of Indijence she shewed to the few who knew her, that Contentment was better than Riches. John Wright Rector of this Parish to whom she said amen 25 years pays this tribute to her memory' (Tatterford burials, 4 November 1790)

Other entries betray a certain lack of good Christian charity: 'Henry Santry Widdower (by the order of his Schismaticall Sonne) who not only dinyes, but contemnes & rayles against the discipline of the Church of England, & hates the Ministers thereof, was put into the grave in the Churchyeard of Beeston the Sixteenth day of September Anno predicto [1669] without Minister or any but factious persons like himself; which is here set downe & his shamme to posterity' (Beeston-next-Mileham). The denunciation of other religious denominations continued: at Hempnall in 1790 there was buried Dorothy Pitts, aged 17, 'who kept cleer from the Taint of Methodism, amidst Contagion'.

At Bedingham in August 1785 the vicar, John Francis, recorded that he had been successfully operated on for gallstones ('two, weighing an ounce and a half, were extracted'), while 40 years earlier his predecessor had noted that a local gentleman had not only caused 'a great Tumult' by driving into the churchyard in his coach, but had also taken a gravestone out of the church and 'had it polished & made a side Table of'.

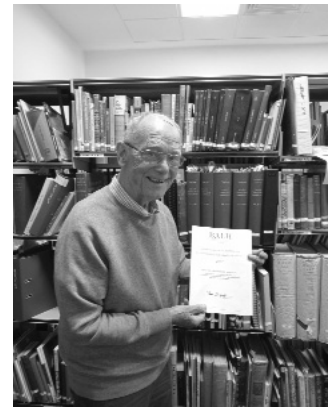
Norwich St John Timberhill register has a mournful procession of burial entries, because this was one of the churches near the castle, the place of execution. Who can fail to be deeply disturbed by the following sinister sentence: 'He that was prest to deathe was buried ye xv daie of June Anno 1566'. At Great Yarmouth in the 1580s and 1590s many burial entries have a laconic annotation: 'one eye', 'longe in pryson', 'noted for a wytche', 'dwelt in ye marshe', a man that dyed in the boate'. All life and death is there - and every now and then, a startlingly vivid image is conjured: at Marham in July 1762, 'Mary, Wife of John Robinson (Poor John crying sadly) buried'.



With passion and authority

Melvyn Thompson

Melvyn is proud to be Kidderminster born and bred. Professionally his work as a development engineer in carpet manufacturing gave him a wealth of experience in the industry with a number of different companies. At Brinton's Ltd in Kidderminster, one of the oldest family companies, he took on the role of company historical archivist and it was in this capacity that he became involved with plans to establish a Museum of Carpet. Melvyn was a member of the core project team that set up the museum which opened in 2012. The closure of the carpet technology and design courses at Kidderminster College was a sad development that benefited the embryonic museum with the transfer of their materials and equipment under Melvyn's supervision.



Melvyn with his BALH Award certificate

Well into retirement, he continues to work with the Carpet Museum Trust as historical and technical advisor, researching the documents and other resources that come into the collections, advising on their provenance and significance.

Within the museum Melvyn has given tours to schools and other visitor groups, and advises others on their research. He has delivered hundreds of talks to audiences throughout the West Midlands, as well as appearances on radio and television. He has researched and written three books on the carpet industry, and has developed a programme of local town walks.



Melvyn Thompson with the Duke of Kent at the Museum of Carpet, June 2015

Melvyn has also been an active contributor to other local historical organisations, including the Kidderminster Civic Society, the Archaeological & History Society, the Heritage Opportunities Group, and Wyre Forest Historical Research Group. He has written other books on the Kidderminster & Stourport Electric Tramways, Weaving in Bridgnorth and St George's Church Kidderminster. His authoritative knowledge on the area means he is often asked for advice on heritage projects, for example the Weavers Cottages heritage lottery application.

Melvyn shares his knowledge with the passion and authority of his unique and long experience.

With thanks to Melvyn Thompson, Geoffrey Gilbert, Jean Talbot and Jill Edwards

MUSEUM OF CARPET KIDDERMINSTER

https://museumofcarpet.org

BALH and the Historic Towns Trust collaboration

Nick Millea

We are delighted to report on a most successful collaboration between BALH and the Historic Towns Trust. Under the banner headline 'Mapping our past: shaping our future', the Trust identified four speakers who offered online lectures every Wednesday evening at 7pm for four weeks in March.

Caroline Barron, who is both BALH President and an HTT trustee introduced the first session on 7 March where Vanessa Harding (University of London) spoke on 'Reconstructing London on the eve of the Great Fire'. The following week saw Roey Sweet (University of Leicester) looking at 'The invention of the Historic Town', followed by Julian Munby (formerly of Oxford Archaeology) on 'Mapping Medieval Oxford', and Catherine Clarke (Institute of Historical Research) concluded the programme by outlining 'Four medieval itineraries: maps and immersive history in Chester and Swansea'.

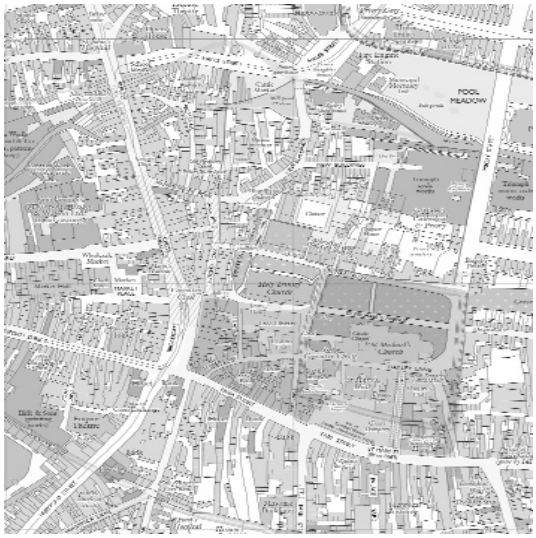
The series used the Trust's atlases and maps to support all four sessions. These products depict urban development from medieval times, and thus show topographic change at a glance. They are new maps, combining historical sources to show evolving towns in great detail at a common scale of 1:2,500.

In 2017 Caroline Barron reported on the Trust's work in *LHN* 123, pp.13-14. Since then, the Trust has developed an ambitious vision aiming for every town and city in Great Britain to have an authoritative atlas of maps and text that enables greater appreciation of the nation's urban history and historic townscapes. Over the past year the Trust has released such an atlas for Oxford and maps for Canterbury, Coventry, Oxford, Alnwick & Alnmouth, and Beverley.

Engagement throughout the series was excellent, delivering the very best of academic cartography and local history in an accessible style. 704 individuals booked to attend the talks, and 610 attended, delivering a refreshingly low attrition rate. Such was the success of this joint venture that another four talks have already been scheduled for the same time in 2023.

Nick Millea is Map Curator at the Bodleian Libraries and a Trustee of the Historic Towns Trust

www.historictownsatlas.org.uk



An extract from the Historical Map of Coventry published, in May 2021 by the HTT, as part of Coventry's status as UK City of Culture 2021. In the background is a digitised OS map of Coventry in 1917 and superimposed are the sites of the city's main lost medieval and post-medieval buildings. At that date, Coventry was amongst the fastest-growing British towns and the scale of small industrial premises within the city centre is evident here, including new car factories. The map shows the site of the original cathedral and priory; Coventry's medieval cathedral was the only one in England to be completely lost at the Reformation when Lichfield became the seat of the diocese. The exact site and form of Coventry Castle remain the subjects of much debate.

Note: this is just a taste, the maps are MUCH more impressive in colour. JH

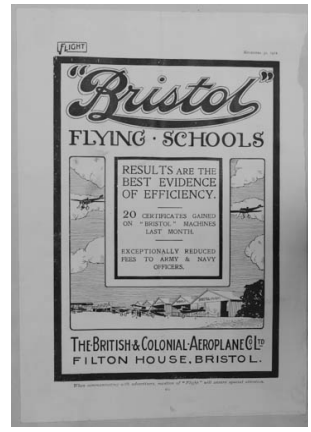
The Aviation and Aerospace Archives Initiative

Louise Clarke

Aviation manufacturing began within the UK in February 1909 when Short Brothers set up the UK's first aircraft factory at Leysdown on the Isle of Sheppey. The popularity of flying led to a significant number of aircraft design and manufacturing companies being established across Britain. What remains today of those early pioneers, and their aircraft manufacturing successors, are not just examples of their machines, but also business papers, technical drawings, marketing brochures, photographs and other records that evidence their extraordinary contribution to the aviation industry.

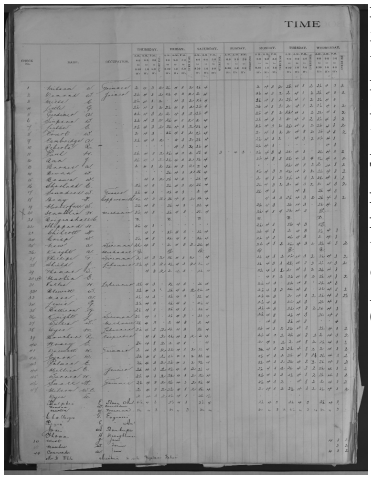
This archival material has been scattered across the nation amongst a large number of archives, libraries, museums, societies and individuals. To assist researchers in locating material, the Aviation and Aerospace Archives Initiative (AAAI) has compiled a guide to signpost relevant archive collections to anyone wishing to learn more about the history of the UK's aircraft manufacturing industry.

Each entry in the guide includes a history of the organisation, principle or significant aircraft and a list of where records of that particular company are held. A sample entry for the British & Colonial Aeroplane Company Ltd, shows that material for this company exists at Aerospace Bristol, The National Aerospace Library and Bristol Archives. The company history notes that the British & Colonial Aeroplane Co Ltd was formed at Filton, near Bristol, in 1910 and traded under that name until 1920 when assets were transferred to a new company, Bristol Aeroplane Co Ltd.



Records in the Aerospace Bristol archive collection give a sense of the scale and growth of the company in those early years, with sales ledgers and account books indicating the company's early success. Seen alongside the papers of Sir George White at Bristol Archives (as listed in the guide), these records show the origins of an industry that is still present in the area today. A timekeeping book from 1911 records the names and occupations of individuals employed at the factory, giving an indication of the type of work the inhabitants of Filton were doing and the wages they were being paid. Volumes of newspaper cuttings and company advertisements complement an extensive photographic collection and together they give a sense of the rapid progress the company made in the 1910s. They show how the "Bristol" brand became known throughout the UK and the world with the opening of its own Flying Schools and its aircraft demonstrations in India and Australia.

The AAAI guide shows that the National Aerospace Library (NAL) holds additional British & Colonial Company Ltd records, including the first company minute book (available to view for free online on the NAL website). This minute book is essential read-



an example of a page in the 1911 timekeeping book; you are not expected to be able to read this, but it shows the level of detail available

ing for anyone interested in the origins of the aircraft industry in Bristol as, amongst many other things, researchers can discover about the expansion of the factory at Filton, the employment of women during the First World War and the company's Flying Schools at Larkhill and Brooklands.

As this example shows, the AAAI's guide brings together information on archive collections from across the UK. However, the guide is by no means complete. There are undoubtedly many archives of UK aircraft manufacturers that are not yet included and the AAAI welcomes contributions where additional information is known. The guide is available at

https://ukaeroarchives.wordpress.com/

Contributions to the guide to be sent to:
aviationarchives@mail.com



women workers 1918

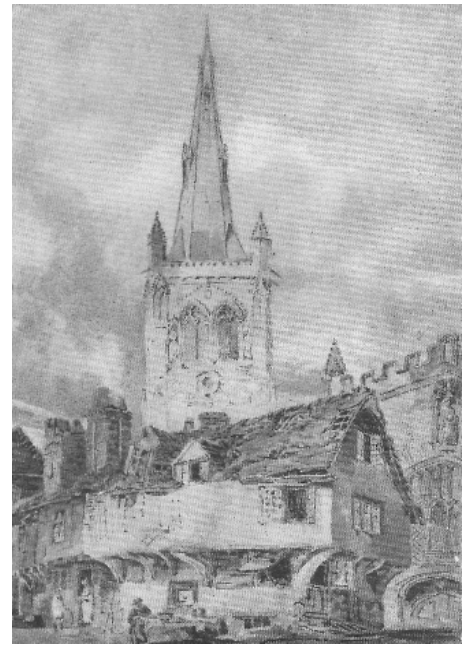
Help wanted please

Here is a fascinating watercolour which forms the frontispiece of *Midland England* by W.G. Hoskins (1948). The original caption says: 'A Northamptonshire town, about 1800. From a watercolour by John Varley. Reproduced by courtesy of the Squire Gallery, London'.

Joanna Mattingly has been unable to find a church in that county that matches the picture. She would be pleased to hear from anyone who can identify the town, and also if anyone knows of the present whereabouts of the painting.

Dr Mattingly's expertise and interest is in the history of church or parish houses, so she would particularly like to know more of the building in the foreground which was probably a guild hall or church house in the market place.

please reply to editor.lhn@balh.org.uk



Manorial documents (see opposite)

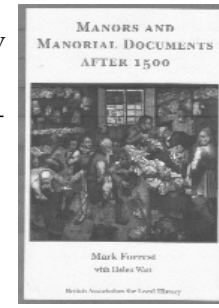
There is a related conference taking place on 6 September hosted by The National Archives and the University of Nottingham and booking has now opened here:

https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/manorial-document-register-conference-2022-tickets-365627641117

See also Mark Forrest's talk at Local History Day in June,

and BALH's newest publication

Manors and Manorial Documents after 1500



Manorial documents
a snapshot of the daily lives of ordinary people

The National Archives

2022 marks the centenary of the Law of Property Act, which led to the creation of the Manorial Documents Register, but very few people are aware of what manorial documents are or what we can learn from them.

The Law of Property Act 1922 gave the Master of the Rolls jurisdiction over manorial records and The National Archives administers these responsibilities on his behalf.

What is a manorial document?
Manorial documents are the administrative records created by manors in England and Wales from around the 12th century until the 1920s and are therefore an important source of information for researchers about people, communities, places and the daily lives of ordinary people. Records date back to the 12th century but survive in large numbers from the 14th to the 20th century.

A manor could be small or large, based in one geographic locality or have parcels of land scattered across a wider area. The lord [of the manor] provided protection to tenants in return for services and rents. What distinguished a manor from other landed estates was its private court that defined and enforced its own customs. The manor court was the lowest court of law in England and Wales, and governed the areas where the lord had civil and criminal jurisdiction.

Manorial documents are legally defined as 'court rolls, surveys, maps, terriers, documents and books of every description relating to the boundaries, wastes, customs or courts of a manor' but title deeds are excluded.

What information do they provide?
Manorial records are an important source for many kinds of historical research and appeal to a broad range of researchers. They are used to study a wide variety of subjects, such as agriculture, land ownership, archaeology, crime, industrial development, urban growth and diet, as well as the broader topics of family, local and house history.

They contain a wealth of information, often about the lowest members of the social hierarchy, and concerning local issues, including:

- cases of transferring property rights
- occupation of land at a given time
- the enforcement of law and order, including cases of minor disputes and debts, theft or petty assault
- the regulation of agricultural affairs such as the allocation of strips of land
- the election of local officials
- the name of the lord of the manor

Court rolls record the names of manorial tenants who were minor officials, jurors or tenants attending court. Property transfers were also noted in court rolls and were crucial to the survival of manorial courts into the 20th century. Surveys and rentals provided an overall view of the manor at a given time, listing the tenants and their holdings alongside a record of rent payments.

Manorial documents can tell us a great deal about the social structure of the manor, both men and women, from the relatively wealthy to the lowest members of the social hierarchy. These documents therefore provide a rich source of information about people and their communities in past centuries.

The Manorial Documents Register
The Manorial Documents Register (MDR) is the official index of English and Welsh manorial records. You can use the register to identify manors in each county of England and Wales, and to find out which records survive from these manors. The register also provides you with the location of the documents, which could be in public or private hands.

With the help of partners across the country over the last 30 years, The National Archives has improved the detail and accuracy of the original paper-based register and made it available online so that you can now access the entire register for England and Wales from wherever you are in the world.

You can find more about manorial documents, including a variety of research guides here
www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manorialdocuments
To search the Manorial Documents Register, please visit
www.discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/manor-search

Devon in the 1920s
an update on the research collaboration exploring a forgotten decade

Julia Neville

Local History News No 135, published in Spring 2020, drew attention to the start of a new project in Devon, a research collaboration between Devon History Society, Devon Family History Society and the South West Heritage Trust that aimed to add to the body of local history research on 1920s England, specifically in relation to Devon. My article referred to the fascination of the contrasts of the decade, and recent publications related to the 1921 census have highlighted these too. There was a continuing tension between the promises of the Coalition Government about 'reconstruction' and the better brighter future which we owed to the war dead to create, and the reality of economic crises, unemployment and poverty and domestic and industrial drudgery which was what much of the population experienced.

I well remember how it was written in the excitement of planning for the launch of our project in March 2020 - and how by the time it was published we were reluctantly cancelling that launch event as the tsunami of lockdown overwhelmed us. Loth to let go of a good idea just because we couldn't meet in person we moved our activity principally to Zoom. We deferred the launch (by Zoom) for a year and welcomed long distance our guest speaker who set us off on thinking about the Legacy of the Great War in March 2021 instead of March 2020.

Using the network of DHS members and affiliated societies, and following up the interests of people who'd made bookings for the launch but been disappointed we also set out on research for three of our principal themes - Growing Up, Rural Life, and Tourism and Leisure. The closure of archives meant that much of the initial work was confined to what was available on the internet, but fortunately that was enough to encourage us to research, and the Devon History Society offered bursaries for subscriptions to the on-line newspaper archive. Material started to come in to the project's Knowledge Library: contributions from individuals about their Devon families; references to published documents; the starts of articles and project work. We had good audiences for our principal 'public' events on Tourism and on Growing Up, designed to stimulate research, and convened working groups on Education, Tourism, Estates and Landowners, Farming and Agricultural Education.

As you will remember lockdown eased and tightened and eased again. We explored additional channels. We ran an 'Iconic Images' competition for local history groups (the winner is shown here). We put up an on-line contribution to Heritage Open Days with a tour of 'Edible Devon', highlighting the best-remembered of Devon's restaurants and tea rooms in the 1920s. One hardy volunteer did the long



The winning picture in Devon History Society's Iconic Images of Devon in the 1920s competition, submitted by Newton St Cyres Local History Group. It pictures three charabancs lined up in the village street, filled with children from the Sunday Schools and their families, just about to depart for a summer outing to the seaside on 1st July 1924.

rail journey up to the National Archives to photograph the parish farming statistics. A group researching the history of Exeter's slums made a Zoom presentation to the regional Women's History Network on the lives of women in the slums. In the dark days over the winter of 2021-22 a number of volunteers gave their time to put on 'Expert Witness' seminars on topics such as Housing, Health and Welfare and Dressing Devon in the 1920s, with the aim of enriching our research. With the assistance of a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund we made a reminiscence DVD designed for use in care homes, with images and artefacts from the 1920s, helping get people talking about their own memories and their family's experiences. A recent venture has been to engage people around the county in trying to identify buildings pictured in R.T. Shears' *Housing the Rural Worker*, a book about the rehabilitation of the county's rural slums. (We've had some success - but there are still some to find!)

Two years on from what had been our planned launch date, we are not yet back quite to normal working. The county's archives still operate a restricted working policy, for example, and there remains some nervousness about meeting in person. We did decide to hold our first live event this year in the museum in Newton Abbot, looking at the development of transport in the 1920s, and we have another live event planned for the autumn with a focus on market gardening and nurseries. But our Zoom account is still well used. In a county the size of Devon it is a boon to be able to get together, as we did this week, a group of researchers interested in maritime history - one from the Bere peninsula, one from Bideford, one from Exmouth, and myself in Exeter, without any of us having to get into a car and drive somewhere. I don't expect we will give up our Zooming entirely.

We had originally planned to be completing our researches by the end of this year and then to be able to spend 2023 digesting our material, making comparisons, and preparing to present and publish in 2024. We have now decided that we should move that end date forward to 2025 and I have no doubt we will have many stories to tell. Interest is building up. Local museums and heritage centres are beginning to volunteer to contribute a Devon in the 1920s display. My mailing list for the project updates gets longer each quarter.

I'm still interested, as I said in my article two years ago, in hearing from anyone else who has been researching 1920s history. We know more now about what Devon was like in the 1920s and we can map out the tensions between the progressives and the reactionaries that affected life in so many different ways. But other places will have different stories. We'd like to draw some comparisons. If you have something to share, then please do get in touch with me either by email to j.f.neville@btinternet.com or through the Devon History Society website contacts page.

Julia Neville is Devon in the 1920s Project Manager

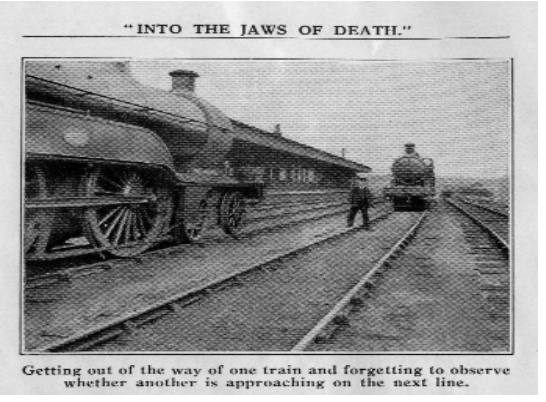
https://www.devonhistorysociety.org.uk

Expanded railway research tool

From mid-July, the 'Railway Work, Life & Death' project's database of accidents to British and Irish railway staff will include an additional 16,000 cases, covering 1900-1939. The database provides information about what happened, to whom, and where. It helps show another way the railway had an impact on your area. It's searchable by location, county and country, as well as by other criteria, such as railway company, name and occupational role. The project is keen for you to use its resources, and would appreciate hearing from you when you do use it.

The database, and a range of other resources, are all available free, from:

www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk



Posed 1930s accident prevention photograph, from the booklet Prevention of Accidents to Staff engaged in Railway Operation.



BALH Awards for Local Historians 2022

FOR OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION

Cecil Amor, Dorset: an inspiring, long-serving leader of Bridport History Society; researching, writing and sharing local history

Stephe Cove, Cumbria: providing outstanding dedication and practical support to Duddon Valley Local History Group

Martin Green, Warwickshire: co-founder of Warwickshire Industrial Archaeology Society, contributing enthusiastic leadership and rigorous research

Melvyn Thompson, Worcestershire:* making a pivotal contribution to the history of Kidderminster's industrial heritage through publications, talks and civic involvement

FOR A SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

The Griffin
Chadderton Historical Society



Bob Chown (left) and Roger Packham (right) receiving their certificates from BALH President Professor Caroline Barron at Local History Day, June 2022

FOR RESEARCH & PUBLICATION

The David Hey Memorial Article 2022
Andy Ford, 'Essex sessions of the peace & the Peasants' Revolt', *Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology & History* 4th series vol.10 ***[winner long articles]***

Diana Coldicott, 'George Barnes of Andover (1758-1832): enclosure commissioner', *Lookback at Andover* (Andover History and Archaeology Society) vol.4 no.2 (September 2021)

John H Harris, 'Georgetown girls: a history of the Scottish shell filling factory 1915-18', *Scottish Local History* no.108 (Spring 2021)

Jane Wheeler, 'The mouse that got away: An act of militant activism during the Votes for Women campaign, Bradford 1913', *The Bradford Antiquary* (Bradford Historical and Antiquarian Society) no.82 (2021)
Wesley Henderson-Roe, 'Chiswick High Road - a retail revelation', *Brentford and Chiswick Local History Journal* no.30 (2021) ***[winner short articles]***

Mavis Curtis, 'Setting up home in 1933', Huddersfield Local History Society Journal no.32 (2021/22)

Bob Chown, 'Black Lives Mattered in eighteenth century Woodchurch', *Scuppets & Scutchell* (the journal of the Woodchurch Ancestry Group, Kent) no.2 (Spring 21)

Roger Packham, 'Through Coulsdon on a globe: the amazing Mlle Florence', *Local History Records: Journal of the Bourne Society* vol.103 (Spring 2021)

*profiled on page 5
**see page 16

Local History Photographer of the Year Awards

see back cover and report page 17

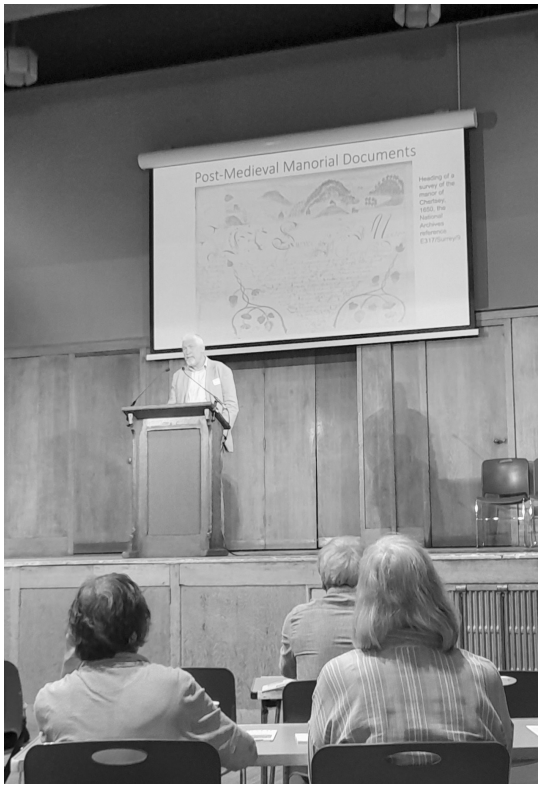
Local History Day 2022

some pictures from Conway Hall



our special guest speaker
Janina Ramirez delivering her lecture



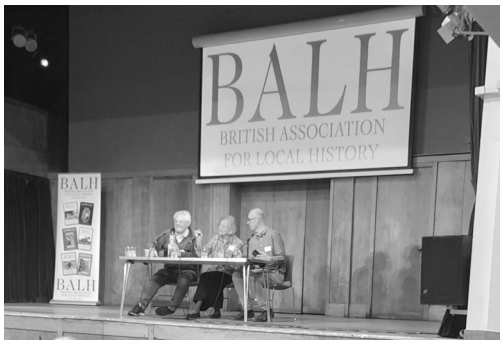




the BALH bookstall doing brisk trade

(left top) BALH President Professor Caroline Barron introducing the morning speaker, Mark Forrest (left lower)

Local History Day photographs from Stephen Miller, Catherine Warr, Paul Carter, Jane Howells



Insights into running a hybrid event

Paul Carter



(above) the British Asssociation for Local History Annual General Meeting;
at the table are (l-r) Iain Taylor (Treasurer), Caroline Barron (President) and Paul Dryburgh (Chair)



The BALH Digital Team,
(l-r) Meghan Kelleher, Social Media Fellow, Paul Carter, Digital Manager, and Catherine Warr, Engagement Fellow.

The date for Local History Day, traditionally our major annual event, had been fixed in the calendar for many months. Conway Hall in London, the venue for the 2019 event, was booked for 2020, before its cancellation and subsequent move to an online version in the following September. 2021 Local History Day inevitably also took place online.

BALH is a national organisation, but our concerns and thought processes mirror those of local societies and groups around the country. We wanted to return to a physical event, but at the same time not lose the considerable impact and audience we've gained through our successful online programme of events. There was no way of knowing what the response would be; were the audience desperate to getting back to face-to-face meeting or so concerned about travel costs and being around people and now so used to the flexibility of online that they would wish to stay at home? It was against this backdrop that we planned our first hybrid event.

A venue for a hybrid event requires very demanding characteristics: reliable high-speed internet, good lighting, amplified sound, and above all, the equipment and expertise to put everything together. The team at Conway Hall were, fortunately, well-organised in this. The Sunday Concert series, founded in the 1880s, is the longest running of its kind in Europe, and a global pandemic was not going to break this tradition! The hall was one of the first in London to be fully equipped for regular online broadcast, with multiple high-quality webcams, lighting and audio.

In its traditional format, the Local History Day programme is well established. We had two speakers, we must conduct the annual general meeting, present the Local History awards and of course fit plenty of time for local history 'networking'. This year too, we had to include our inaugural Local History Photographer of the Year competition in the programme. From the outset, I was very clear that I did not want a hybrid event to be a 'fly on the wall' view for the online audience. This has tended to be the way early hybrid events have run, with the online audience rather an

afterthought. I didn't want to diminish all the hard work we put in to making each BALH online event an 'experience', as anyone who has attended our Local History Hour, digital skills webinars or Local History Day 2021 will understand (and if you haven't attended one, do so please as we've a wonderful programme of content). I wanted an interactive experience, where the online audience could feel part of the day, listened to, spoken to, as well as sharing in the excellent talks planned.

My challenge therefore was how to accommodate the in-person programme, and create an online experience, while keeping within the general time constraints of 11:00am to 4:00pm on a summer Saturday in June. Firstly, I wanted the online audience to have their own opportunity for questions and chat with the speakers. Secondly, as much as we love the processes of the Association, I didn't want to force the online audience to sit through the AGM. Finally, I wanted to include video content from the BALH Outreach team to both highlight their interests and, more importantly, encourage all of you reading this to record something similar and send it to us.

These requirements increased the complexity of our work significantly. We needed a separate space to broadcast from. In the case of Conway Hall, the Green Room, just behind the stage, was ideal in being both light and connected to the venue's high-speed internet. I needed to create more time, in order to accommodate the online chat with the two speakers, achieved by dual streaming some of our content. This gave the online audience a choice of staying with the hall (AGM and announcement of the Local History Awards), or following the interactive chat with Mark Forrest and Janina Ramirez. With Janina's talk programmed for the end of the day, there was no option other than have her speak to the online audience before she had been on stage. In practice, this worked well, and from feedback was highly popular with those watching. During the breaks we scheduled further chats, and those videos the team worked so hard to put together.

With now effectively two events running in parallel, but joined at certain points, timings were critical. We needed a formalised plan, so everyone knew what was happening, and where they needed to be at any given time. I produced a very colourful spreadsheet, detailing what was happening, minute by minute in both the hall and online.

To make all this work, the BALH team running the in-person event, was boosted by a further nine people, from within and outside the organisation. The most public of these was Megan Kelleher, BALH Social Media Fellow, who spent the day in the Green Room, hosting the online audience and conducting interviews; essentially bringing the experience of the day to those watching remotely. Megan was supported by me, stage managing and coordinating the running order, controlling the camera feed and giving her cues (usually written on a whiteboard or at times simply waving!). I was in the Green Room also, watching the hall feed on a small monitor (see below). With timings so critical to keep the two events in sync, I needed eyes and ears in the hall itself, to advise me when the next speaker was ready. Diane, in a floor manager role was in constant contact with me, waiting for my signal to say we could hand back to the hall. We were supported by three technicians from Conway Hall. Dan sat next to me in the Green Room, responsible for Megan's camera and audio, while Jack and James ran the audio-visual feed in the hall itself.



Paul's view of Meghan broadcasting (in coversation with BALH Chair Paul Dryburgh)

Online, we had Katie and Chris to monitor the chat, post links, answer questions, or pass on anything urgent to the hall team. Pam posted regular updates of the talks to our social media.

To capture and record content with the attendees, the team included our Digital Engagement Fellow Catherine Warr, supported by Marek, our work placement intern. Their hours of recorded footage of our award winners and BALH members, will be used both in our content output and future promotional materials.

The hybrid team had one thing in common. None of us had done this before! Megan, Catherine and I work closely to produce our online broadcasts and the Conway Hall team have broadcast the events hosted there. But none of us had run or taken part in a hybrid event of this type, with live streaming the hall, the Green Room and video content in one combined production. There were certainly technical issues on the day, but all minor enough to be fixed or not repeated. This was in the main down to not being able to have a

full rehearsal in advance. The costs both financial and logistical would be too prohibitive to be able to justify that. In practice this most typically meant the speakers in the hall having to wait for a few minutes to start. Some things simply just happened. At one point the hall schedule overran considerably, meaning the online timings had to be adapted on the fly, while our keynote speaker Janina got lost on the way to the hall!

If we had to run the event again, there's many things we now know and would be able to do better. The BALH team have already started discussions and plans for our next event, which may be in-person, may be online or may be hybrid. More news to follow…

For Megan, at the sharp end of sitting in front of the camera, dealing with the fluidity of the day, she felt 'It was definitely an experience! Slightly daunting to be talking to a camera and being very aware of my movements and voice etc, but once we got chatting with the audience it helped me to relax and feel like I was chatting to a friend'.

For all the time, effort and not inconsiderable cost, the hybrid event was worth producing. We are all in a new world now, and as I started out with saying, even though we're a national organisation, these same concerns about what to do next will be reflected around the country. While only the lucky few will have the resources we were able to commit to the day, we're still only a dedicated team. We hope that our experiences will help us to support local history organisations, with advice and guidance in running events in future.

Megan said afterwards, 'The hybrid event brought home why we do what we do. We had so many comments about it being one of the first times people could participate in Local History Day because of its hybrid nature. Furthermore, we're able to talk to participants who aren't able to attend for a range of reasons. Financial constraints, difficulty leaving the house due to other commitments/access requirements all play a part, so to enable these individuals to meet with people and chat about their research is amazing.'

One question I've been asked (and am still pondering); which is better? Being in person or online? That's not just limited to us, but to any televised event. Is it better to be present, with the sights, sounds and smells, or to be sitting at home, watching in, with the benefit of the additional content? That's for you to decide.

Recordings of the full event, and individual segments, are all available on our YouTube channel https://balh.org.uk/youtube (Playlist Local History Day 2022).

Award for a Society Newsletter 2022

Heather Falvey

Chadderton Historical Society

The quarterly newsletter of the Chadderton Historical Society is called *The Griffin.* The reason for this name is deeply embedded in the area's local history; indeed, the griffin has been associated with Chadderton since the mid-thirteenth century. It comes from the arms of the Trafford family who took possession of the Manor of Chadderton and Foxdenton, adopted the name of the township and formed the Chadderton family. Two griffins are portrayed on the Chadderton coat of arms and two are also used to support Oldham's coat of arms. (*Oldham Evening Chronicle,* 4 March 2009)*


THE GRIFFIN

Quarterly Newsletter of the Chadderton Historical Society

Number 99 November 2021

The Griffin comprises a single page of coloured A4 crammed with information about the local history of Chadderton. It opens with a 'Comment' by the editor on current topics such as 'Town centre renewal' or 'Political dynamism to electoral lethargy' (the contrast between struggles to gain universal suffrage and current low turnouts at local elections). Next are several long-running series such as 'Notable lords of the manor of Chadderton and Foxdenton' and 'It's a fact' (strange but true facts, such as 'Chadderton council owned tramway system for shortest period possible': a split second at midnight on 9 August 1925). Relevant birthday and wedding anniversary greetings are sent to members, and obituaries are given. Other articles might include interesting or unusual newspaper reports from over 100 years ago and details of archive material received.

This lively newsletter keeps members informed about the past and the present in an engaging way.

*BALH shortened URL www.balh.org.uk/MRP134

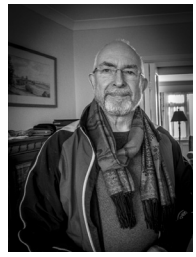
Local history photographer of the year 2022

Paul Carter

Last summer, we launched our new nationwide photography competition, asking both BALH members and the wider public the question 'what does local history mean to you? This was to be answered with a photograph and a few words to explain what that image, that view, meant to the photographer.

We've been delighted by the breadth and variety of submissions received, and our judging panel were given a hard job shortlisting the finalists in both the adult and under 18 categories. Despite that, the panel were unanimous in their decision, both in the winning images and their supporting words. ***The two winning photographs are in colour on our back cover.***

David Moore, the BALH Local History Photographer of the Year



The grade II listed Sandfields Pumping Station is a forgotten hidden historic gem. Like most industrial heritage building, its familiarity in the landscape has eroded away the curiosity of the casual passer-by. Yet this Romanesque styled masterpiece is a cathedral to the industrial revolution, for years unloved, for years abandoned.*

Its Romanesque style took the language from the past and built the way to the future. Celebrating new technology and progress, it bought life giving clean water to the beleaguered communities of the industrial Black Country, bringing health and wellbeing to all.

This building and its historic contents showcased the provision of clean water that seeded the developments that enabled Britain to become a modern industrial country. Britain lead the world in technical and scientific developments that have improved the quality of people's lives worldwide and are a testament the vision of the Victorian engineers and their philanthropic endeavours.

Let us look at this building and remind ourselves of the tens of thousands of people who died in the cholera epidemics of the mid nineteenth century. Most of these unfortunate people were buried in mass graves or cholera pits, with no identity, dignity or recognition of their lives.

This building is a monument to their life, giving them back a voice that allows them to tell their remarkable story.

"The heritage of the modern water industry is almost entirely absent, despite its unarguable relevance to human development. J. Douet"

Carol Langford, Runner-up

The Posada Pub, Lichfield Street Wolverhampton (below). This is a Victorian Grade II listed building situated in the town (now city) centre, built in 1886 on the site of the old Noah's Ark Inn. It still has many of its original fittings and fixtures, including ceramic tiling inside and out, rare snob screens and beautiful floors that absorb the natural light coming through the stained-glass windows. For me it's always been the pub where the fans of Wolverhampton Wanderers stream out of, having pre match drinks before supporting their team at Molineux. As a young teenager I always wondered how so many noisy, gold and black fans could fit into such a small place. Once old enough to use the pub for its intended purpose I discovered the big beer yard at the back. An iconic and much-loved building in Wolverhampton.



Madeline Davies, aged 14, the BALH Young Local History Photographer of the Year



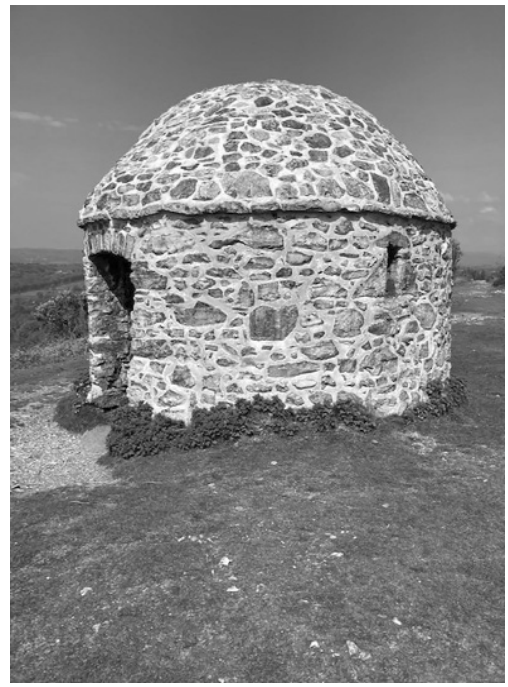
The Druid on the ruins is one of my favourite places to visit while at Shugborough Hall. It is a family favourite as long-standing members of the National trust, but I think that it is a perfect frame for the river behind as you can walk into it and view the wildlife passing by including swans, geese and other waterfowl. The contrast between the well upkept gardens and house and the disappearing ruins is beautiful and I think it intertwines past and present perfectly.

Sophie Poore, aged 11, Runner-up

Throughout the lockdown I spent most of my time walking up on the beautiful and rugged Culmstock Beacon (right), exploring the wildlife, stunning views and magical surroundings. It's a wildlife haven and attracts a great amount of animals, reptiles and birds.

One of the many reasons why I love walking up there is the change in the atmosphere at the different times of the year. In the spring you can see the frogspawn metamorphosis into frogs. In the summer you might catch a glimpse of the disguised adders cloaked in with the terrain and astounding sunsets shimmering on the horizon. In Autumn time you can feel the familiar breeze brush upon your shoulder once again and in winter you can wrap up warm and see the frost, ice and snow glimmer on the paths.

High on the southwest point on Blackdown Common is Culmstock Beacon. It is one of a chain of Elizabethan beacons used for lighting fires to warn of advancing enemies, for example, The Spanish Armada. The beehive-shaped structure was built of flint and was rebuilt after the collapse of the earlier one. The beacon has been lit up for numerous celebrations including the Queen's Golden Jubilee in February 2002.



Many more of the entries will be showcased in our online and print media over the coming months. Thank you to everyone who entered. While you will all agree the standard has been very high, that wasn't the only point for us. We wanted to take visual census of the country, of how we see local history in our own environment. The mundane is as important as the dramatic; the subject matter as important as the image quality.

The **2023** competition will be launched this summer. That means there will be plenty of time, through all seasons, to submit entries and absolutely no excuse not to take part!

Further details can be found at www.balh.org.uk/photo

Correspondence (1)

Ann Simock writes about Trevor Fisher's item on Arnold Bennett and the Leopard Inn, Burslem (*LHN* 143 p 32):

I was very pleased that someone is voicing their concerns regarding the neglect of history in Stoke on Trent. Trevor's article is quite ironic as I chose it as part of my entry for the photographic competition. My theme was the state of local history in the area. I chose The Leopard, Chatterley Whitfield Colliery and Mow Cop. It is so sad that even though we have such important and acclaimed sites many are being allowed to decline and fall into decay.

Local history forty years ago

In *LHN* 142 (p15) Jonathan Powell asked if anyone remembered a radio series broadcast in 1972 which inspired the formation of his local society. On the next two pages I have reproduced both sides of a flyer about an early BBC television series on local history from 1982. This is by way of an experiment, as my copy is not in good condition, but I wanted you to be able to read it if possible.

contd on page 35

History on your Doorstep

First broadcast on BBC Television early in 1982

A few years ago the BBC TV series 'Family History' was televised. The production office was deluged with over 40,000 letters seeking advice or making comments. Reference Libraries and Record Offices the length and breadth of Britain noticed a significant increase in the demand for help from genealogists.

Local History, by all accounts, is an even more popular interest than Family History and whereas we hope that the response to the series will be as great, if not greater, the pressure on libraries and archivists may be excessive.

In this leaflet, which complements the eight programmes in the BBC TV series and the accompanying book, we hope to help you as you start your search into the History on Your Doorstep.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

J. R. Ravensdale – **History on Your Doorstep.** BBC 1982.

W. G. Hoskins – **The Making of the English Landscape.** Hodder and Stoughton (hardback), Penguin 1970 (paperback).
Both are essential reading for pleasure, and the foundation of a new and fruitful approach to local history.

W. B. Stephens – **Sources for English Local History.** Cambridge University Press.
The best book on the sources that the local historian can use.

J. Richardson – **The Local Historian's Encyclopeadia.**
Probably the most useful book for the working local historian ever published.

D. Iredale – **Discovering Local History. Discovering Your Old House.**
Shire Publication 1980.
Very useful, simple, and practical pamphlets.
Each will make an excellent start to an investigation.

The Local Historian – **Standing Conference for Local History.**
How to sample what other people are doing.
All working local historians should subscribe.
Standing Conference for Local History, 26 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3HU.

R. Foster – **Discovering English Churches.** BBC 1981.

D. Dymond – **Writing Local History: A Practical Guide.**
Bedford Square Press 1981.

Often pamphlets and books about your own area will be found in local bookshops, stationers or libraries. Although their quality may vary you will find them a fascinating starting point for studies about your own area; they have the advantage too of being inexpensive.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Most of these books will be available for borrowing through your local lending library. Most libraries will also have material about the home area and there will be a large collection in the nearest reference library or special local studies department. Here you will find books on many aspects of your area, including volumes of the 'Victoria County Histories' where these have been published.

Other books include county or street directories listing tradesmen, sometimes residents, always fascinating information throughout the 19th century.

As well as books you may also find at least some of the following:

a) Old photographs and prints of the area.

b) Ordnance Survey maps on various scales and editions dating back to the 1840's, and also earlier non-Ordnance Survey maps.

c) Files of local newspapers, perhaps back to the 1800's, which present the most detailed record of the area throughout that period. Remember, however, that paper which is one hundred years old can be very fragile and you may be asked to use microfilm copies rather than the original volumes.

d) A whole variety of other types of material, including sales particulars, census information, perhaps rate books and some manuscripts – though these may be housed in the record office.

Only a small proportion of the 'local collection' will be on general view because of storage and security considerations but it is all available for you to use and the librarians will be happy to help you make the most of it.

BBC CONTINUING EDUCATION
Insight

THE RECORD OFFICE

Almost every county and some of the larger cities have a record office. They contain tithe, enclosure, and Ordnance Survey maps; parish records including registers of baptisms, marriages and burials, overseers and church wardens accounts, which were previously held in parish churches; records of local authorities of the present and the past; and the historical papers of individuals of note, families and their estates, local societies and businesses. You will certainly need to visit your record office frequently, but consult other sources first so that you do not waste your time and that of the archivist.

THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

This is situated in both Chancery Lane and at Kew (Public Record Office, Ruskin Avenue, Kew) in London. They are obviously National sources but are important where local and national events infringe on each other. Chancery Lane specialize in legal and "older" records – Court Rolls – Pipe Rolls – Hundred Rolls etc. and Kew in the more modern records.

THE REGISTER OF ARCHIVES

Quality House, Quality Court, Chancery Lane, London WC2. The register collects catalogues of local records in Great Britain and N. Ireland and acts as a central collecting point for information about manuscript sources.

SOCIETIES AND COURSES

Always try to find out what other people may have done about your area. You will certainly not be the only one interested in a particular area or topic. There are several hundred Local History Societies throughout the country. Your library should have details. The Standing Conference for Local History produces a pamphlet with all their names and addresses. Many local authorities run courses, as do W.E.A.s, and Extra-Mural Departments of Universities. Again your reference library should have details and the Standing Conference also have a list of residential courses for 1982. The National Extension College also have a Correspondence course and a study pack: details from N.E.C., 18 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge CB2 2MN.

Insight Information, BBC, Broadcasting House, London, W1A 1AA

SOCIETIES



Congratulations are due to: (1) all the successful Platinum Jubilee events that brought local history into the limelight in communities across the country (2) societies that are now back to 'normal' having live meetings and other activities (3) groups that have exploited the opportunities of online meetings and have decided to continue doing so and (4) societies celebrating anniversaries in 2022.

Borough of Twickenham Local History Society began in April 1962, so is marking its 60th anniversary. The special edition of their *Newsletter* is in colour. This allows them to reproduce some wonderful maps and other images. Here is a water colour (sadly only in monochrome) showng the floods near Molesey Lock in 1894. It also includes an article on the history of the society over the last 10 years; the first 50 were recorded in the *Newsletter* of April 2012. *www.botlhs.co.uk*



Towcester & District Local History Society first met in March 1982, 40 years ago. They are having an exhibition about the society at Towcester Museum. Their newsletter and invitations to zoom meetings are sent to 140 members. Just over half live in Towcester itself, most are in the neighbouring area, but others are widely scattered, including one in Australia and one in USA.
www.mkheritage.org.uk/tdlhs

Project Purley has also been in existence for 40 years; they had a birthday cake at their AGM in the Spring. *www.project-purley.net*



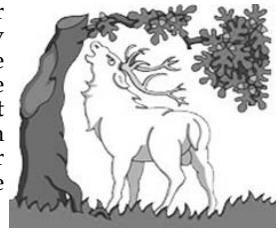
The London Topographical Society is funding a new prize in honour of the late Dr Ann Saunders. A prize of £1,000 will be offered annually for an original and unpublished research essay on the topography, development or buildings of London in any period. Submissions should be made by 1 April 2021. Further details can be found on their website *https://londontopsoc.org/about-us/ann-saunders-essay-prize/.*

Every two years the **Cleveland and Teesside Local History Society** holds the Packett Prize Competition. The next closing date is 31 March 2023. The competition seeks to encourage new research about the local history of the area, and to encourage new authors, it is only open to amateur local historians. *http://ctlhs.co.uk/packett-prize/background-information-and-how-to-enter/* To encourage new researchers their *Newsletter* has been publishing a series of articles 'A beginners guide to local history sources on the internet'. In the May 2022 issue this explores to wonders of Google Books - which has many volumes full of primary source material such as *Reports by the Commissioners for British Fisheries (1861)*, *Mortality from Respiratory Diseases in Dusty Trades (1918)*, famous reports on agriculture, as well as trade journals, directories and guide books.

31 August 2022 is the closing date for the **Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology** awards, including the Flora Murray Award 'to recognise the endeavours and achievements of local groups, societies and individuals in the fields of Lincolnshire history and archaeology'.
http://www.slha.org.uk/about/awards/
8 October is the date for the Lincolnshire Archaeology Conference 'Discoveries and Research from Lincolnshire and Beyond'. The Society's AGM will take place on 22 October. *Further details at www.slha.org.uk*

The Bucks Local History Network 2022 conference will be on 1 October in Aylesbury, with a focus on Cottage Industries in Buckinghamshire.
http://www.bucksas.org.uk/blhn-home.html

The first Berkshire Heritage On-line Fair will take place on Saturday 6 August, hosted by **Berkshire Local History Association** and the **Berkshire Family History Society**. The event will cover Berkshire both before and after the 1974 boundary changes, so will be of interest to some outside the current county borders, in Oxfordshire for example. Berkshire LHA's logo (left)



https://www.blha.org.uk/
https://berksfhs.org/berkshire-heritage-online-fair/

Essex Industrial Archaeology Group is holding an Industrial Heritage Fair on 1 October at Silver End Village Hall. Their AGM will be on 13 November at Christ Church, London Rd, Chelmsford. The formal business will be followed by a talk on the Frederick Roberts Archive of Industrial History.
https://www.esah1852.org.uk/eiag/events

Cumbria Local History Federation Annual Convention and AGM will take place on 15 October at Allithwaite Village Hall. 'Down on the Farm' is the topic, and the keynote speaker is Angus Winchester on 'Flocks and Herds: Livestock farming in medieval and early modern times'.
https://www.clhf.org.uk/

West of England and South Wales Women's History Network is holding its annual conference in person on 15 October in Bristol. The theme is 'Women and Money: a historical perspective'.
http://weswwomenshistorynetwork.co.uk/

The April 2022 *Newsletter* from F**riern Barnet & District Local History Society** illustrates how a large statue is taken away for restoration. Queen Victoria in Friary Park was unceremoniously winched by a large crane onto the back of a lorry. The history of the statue was described in their *Newsletter* in September 2029, available on their website
www.friern-barnet history.org.uk



There is always information of interest beyond their borders in *Clish-Clash*, the e-newsletter of the **Scottish Local History Forum.** The **National Library of Scotland** provides a wide range of talks and workshops, many with a strong local history theme. The current programme can be found at *https://www.nls.uk/events/workshops-and-tours*, though each event only appears between 3 and 1 weeks before its date. The **SLHF Directory** of local history resources and organisations is well worth exploring *https://www.slhf.org/scottish-local-history-directory.* **Raphael Tuck & Sons Ltd** opened their first shop in London in 1866, and published postcards and much more printed materials with images from around the world. There is a free database of their historic postcards *https://tuckdbpostcards.org./*

Cheltenham Local History Society have both an evening and a morning lecture programme - an excellent idea for those who prefer not to gout in the dark. And the evening programme talks are recorded and available online for up to four weeks after the event. *www.cheltlocalhistory.org.uk*

A group of volunteers from **The Norwood Society** began work in 2018 to create a website on local street histories. They have also published articles and given talks on the subject as well as continuing to add new research to the website. *norwoodstreethistories.org.uk*

Meldreth Local History Group's website has reached another milestone - 700 pages. These represent a wealth of information about the village, and more chapters remain to be written. Members of the group continued to work on a number of projects during lockdown. These included further research into some notable Meldreth houses, and work on the ancient village thoroughfares, drawing on the richness of the Topcliffe manorial court rolls. *https://www.meldrethhistory.org.uk/*

A collaborative project between a number of organisations including the John Hampden Society, the Battlefields Trust and the Cromwell Association has been launched to record memorials associated with the **British Civil Wars.** The aim is to identify and record all forms of memorials, plaques, information boards connected to the Civil Wars and the soldiers who fought in them. This will become a resource for visitors and researchers. Information may be submitted at *https://bit.ly/BritishCWMemorials*

Claude Grahame-White was a pioneering aviator who features in an article in the **Send & Ripley History Society** *Journal* May 2022. The information and the illustrations go well with our article on page 7, coming from the very early days of aviation in this country. Illustrated is the front cover of a programme for the inaugural International Aviation Meeting at Bournemouth in 1910. *www.sendandripleyhistorysociety*



Housing is a popular, and important topic for research by local history societies. Two examples in recent newsletters come from different times in the 20th century. **Merton Historical Society** reports on 'a charming residential district' built in the 1920s with government support under the 1923 Housing Act. *www.mertonhistorialsociety.org.uk*



Fleet & Crookham Local History Group published the first part of a study on self-built housing in their area in the 1950s, again as a solution to post-war housing shortages. There is a list of names of members of the Fleet Self Help Housing Society amongst the detailed sources discussed, a valuable aspect of the article. *www.fclhg.org.uk*

Joan Mackay has been postmistress at Monkton Post Office since 1988. During lockdown she researched the building's history, which is published in outline in **Troon@Ayrshire Family History Society** *Journal,* Spring 2022. The first postmaster was a shoemaker and the Post Office was added to his shop. He retired in 1860 when the Hutchison family took over for the next 85 years. The longest running PO in Scotland is at Sanquhar which has been serving customers since 1712. *www.troonayrshirefhs.org.uk*



Members of Parliament are seldom out of the news, and the history of local MPs and their relationship with the constituency is often a matter of much interest. **Baslow History Group** *Newsletter* is running a series about their MPs, the July issue contains 'Elizabethan to Georgian'. The influence of the local landed gentry is prominent, for example half a dozen relatives of Bess of Hardwick served during the second half of the 16th century. Disruptions of the Civil War period are evident, and then further members of the Cavendish family. In 1734 there were 11 electors, who are named. Between 1768 and 1820 there were no contests, again continuing representation by Cavendishes. *https://baslow-history-group.weebly.com/*

It is not long since war memorials were the subject of much research, members will recall reading Kate Tiller's invaluable book *Remembrance and Community: War Memorials and Local History*, published by BALH. There she discusses varied forms of memorial and presents case studies of the way communities made decisions about what to do to remember their war dead. Two different examples

appear in the 2022 issue of *Level Talk*, the journal from **Langport and District History Society** (located on the Somerset Levels). Langport Memorial Recreation Ground has a plaque stating 'this field was purchased in 1920 as a Memorial to the men of the Parish who gave their lives in the GREAT WAR 1914-18 and was dedicated to the enjoyment of the public for ever'. Langport Grammar School's new War Memorial Pavilion was officially opened in March 1922, after discussion about they best way to commemorate the 22 lost: 'This Pavilion was erected in honoured memory of the Master and Old Boys who fell in the Great War. *Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*'. A fire in 1947 destroyed the thatched roof but the building is still serving Huish & Langport Cricket Club to this day. *https://langportheritage.org.uk/*

Christchurch History Society is fortunate to have premises at The Porch Room, Priory House where their archives are stored and where there are facilities for research and preservation work. Here is a photograph of the archive team in action.
www.historychristchurch.org





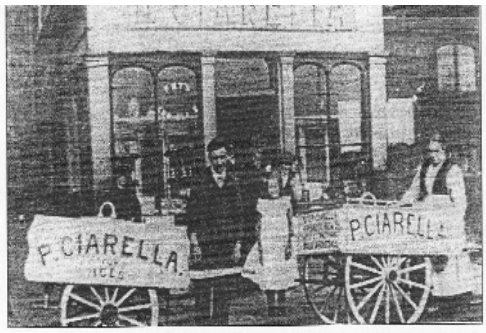
'Stay selfish man and drop a tear
Jane's little bird lies buried here'
is the inscription on a small carved stone in St Chad's Gardens, Uppermill. It is a new replica of the original which is now in Saddleworth Museum retrieved from vandalism and being dumped in the river. An explanation is to be found in the archives of **Saddleworth Historical Society**, where in 1920 it was described as 'canary stone from Dacres was Janie's'; she was Mrs Vivien Jane Shaw Willington.
www.saddleworth-historical-society.org.uk.

Horley's first blue plaque was unveiled in April, dedicated to Ada Coates, a telegraphist at Horley's original Post Office in Yattendon Road. Ada was 19 when she received the first message on 17 May 1900 that Mafeking had been relieved. Doug Cox of **Horley Local History Society** holding the plaque. *www.horley-history.org.uk*





The first family to bring Italian ice cream to Sunderland is believed to be Paulo and Maria Ciarella. **Sunderland Antiquarian Society** archives contain memories from their granddaughter, and a splendid collection of photographs of the business and of the east end of the town where they lived.
www.sunderland-antiquarians.org



the family outside their shop in Prospect Row

'One thing leads to another' can often be said of local history. **Lexden History Group** *Newsletter* June 2022 has an article about Rose Cottage, Lord's Lane, Colchester. At the time of the 1851 census it was occupied by gardener James Monson. His four sons all became photographers. Tracing advertisements for their business demonstrates the multi-skilled character of early photographers, and the necessary mobility of their profession. Edward Monson, for example, initially worked as a land surveyor, then set up a photographic studio at the same time as teaching handwriting. His temporary studios were in Chelmsford, Maldon, Cambridge, Northampton, Coventry, Wolverhampton and elsewhere. *www.lexden-history.org.uk*


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EDWARD MONSON,

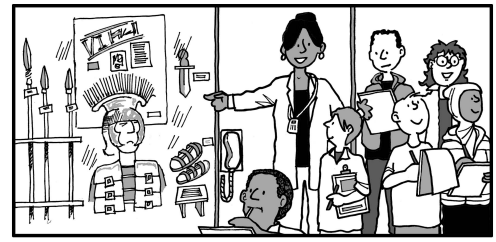
ARTIST, in Daguerreotype, Collodion, and Talbotype,

RESPECTFULLY invites the attention of the Public to his Large Pictures, to his success in the arrangement and taking of Family Groups, and to the unusual facilities which he possesses for taking large numbers of the same person.

2, Addenbrooke Place, Trumpington Street, Cambridge.

(OPPOSITE THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM.)

MUSEUMS



Frogmore Paper Mill (in 'Paper Valley' Hemel Hempstead Hertfordshire) was hit by a devastating fire earlier this year. Progress is being made towards restoration and re-opening. They will still take queries to their archive and collections, and the shop for beautiful handmade paper is available by email. 'Memory Bank' is their oral history project, and you can see short film interviews with former employees on the website. *https://www.frogmorepapermill.org.uk/*



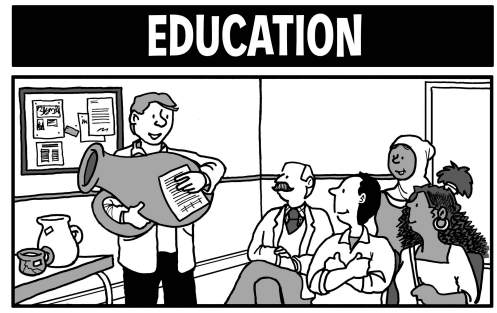
Bank of England Museum has an exhibition until 28 April 2023 'Slavery and the Bank' which explores the history of transatlantic slavery through its connections with the bank of England and the wider city of London. There are free lunchtime tours, and also a film of 'Five key moments from the exhibition' on the website here.
https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/museum/whats-on/slavery-and-the-bank

Friends of Watford Museum are getting ready for a move which will relocate the museum to the Town Hall. Phase One, planned to finish by Summer 2023 is to make a complete inventory of all 35,000 objects in the collection to get their records up to date. Phase Two will include assessing everything to determine its relevance, what display and research value it has, and whether anything should be rehomed elsewhere. By then they will be ready for the move and also have a better understanding of the collection. *www.watfordmuseum.org.uk/friends*

Museum Crush: for museum activities and exhibitions around the country go to *museumcrush@culture24.org.uk*

Teaching Local History

Joe Saunders



Question: Where might you find historians interested in medieval Canterbury, industry in nineteenth century East Anglia and the civil wars in the West Midlands?

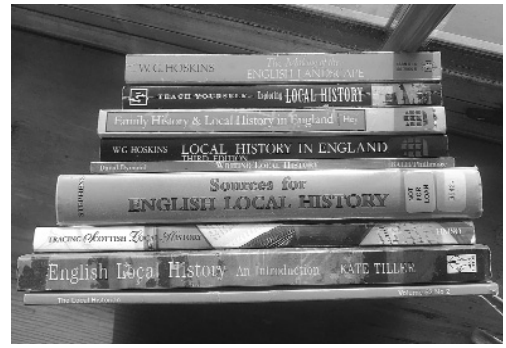
Answer: A local history course. In this case my recent course with BALH's partner Pharos Tutors.

Teaching a local history course feels in many ways totally against the grain of local history in that each student and the tutor has such different place interests and yet are all in a class together. Altogether, everything can paradoxically feel much more national than local for the tutor as you survey the course materials and student interests. Of course, the local historian is always a *generalist* with an interest in a broad scope of time and an array of topics. This is useful as I have discovered that to teach local history you have to have some knowledge of almost everything. While what you don't know, you quickly learn.

With local history we are often considering many diverse aspects of history, dependant on our sources and own inclinations, and so we are used to thinking thematically and over the longue durée. Get enough of us together therefore and there are bound to be overlaps. Very quickly my class began to coalesce around regional (if not local) interests such as the Pulhams and the Waveney Valley in Norfolk, West Yorkshire and the Islington/Finsbury/Hoxton/Shoreditch area in London. We also came together around shared interests in themes as diverse as women's work in World War One to medieval ironworking.

There are many commonalities in approach too in the shared resources we use and how we interpret them. Advice on using historic newspapers or the Domesday Book can be applied much the same for Shropshire as for Essex. As a tutor you are thinking about sources, methods and skills in a universal, shared way. Supplying your students the tools with which they can undertake work in their own patch makes you feel more like the toolmaker than the craftsman. It is a greatly rewarding experience that makes you put your own research into perspective and think harder about the whys and hows of local history.

It is an old cliché that as a teacher you learn just as much as the students but it really is true. I feel I am a better historian for the experience. Certainly, my local history research will benefit from the perspectives and resources shared with me.





(right) Manchester Monastery, Gorton, the dramatic setting for Manchester Histories Festival *(see p 31)*

books ...

Mudlark'd: Hidden Histories from the River Thames

Malcom Russell

Thames & Hudson 2022 224pp
ISBN: 978-0-500-02422-5 £25

As Malcolm Russell observes, the Thames has been witness to much momentous history in the making (Roman invasion, the signing of Magna Carta and the devastation of the Blitz, to name a few), but it has also been witness to, and shaped, the day-to-day lives of millions of ordinary citizens. Indeed, over some 2,000 years numerous objects that belonged to them have found their way into its waters.

In each of the nine main chapters Russell brings different groups of London citizens to life by focussing on particular objects relating to their way of life or profession/occupation that have been found by mudlarks. Thus, for example, in Chapter 2, 'Criminals', he considers 'Cunning Folk - The fight against witchcraft, revealed by a pottery fragment', and 'Coiners - The forgers transported to Australia, revealed by counterfeit coins'. He discusses such people in general and also focusses on individuals, where appropriate records have been found. Each chapter is lavishly illustrated with photographs of other mudlardk'd objects that relate to, or complement, the initial object or the occupation being discussed; so, in Chapter 2 they are 'Finds relating to Witchcraft' and 'Finds relating to Counterfeiting, Convicts and Policing'. There are also paintings or drawings, for example by Rowlandson or Hogarth, of the kinds of people concerned.



Mundane objects such as pipes are the hook for the first section of Chapter 7, 'Addicts', which is about 'Smokers - consumers of a new intoxicant, revealed by clay tobacco pipes' *(below)*. Personally I was drawn to Chapter 4, 'Believers', part 1, 'Pilgrims - Medieval religious travellers revealed by an ampulla' *(below left)*. This is a lead receptacle purchased at the shrine of St Thomas Becket at Canterbury that would have held 'Canterbury water', not just a souvenir but also a wonder-working object in its own right. Russell suggests that it may have been dropped on purpose as an offering in gratitude for a safe return home; but maybe it was a heart-breaking loss during the journey home across the Thames? In Chapter 4, part 2, 'Printers', Russell explains why pieces of Doves type have turned up in the Thames. This unique type was used by the Doves Press to print a complete edition of the Bible in 1903. The printers Walker and Cobden-Sanderson later fell out, and in 1916 Cobden-Sanderson threw the handmade type into the Thames over the course of 170 trips to Hammersmith Bridge; a few pieces were retrieved in 2014.



The first 'mudlarks' were impoverished Victorian children searching the river's foreshore (the area of mud, sand, shingle and rocks exposed for a few hours twice a day at low tide) for anything that they could sell for a few pennies; nowadays mudlarking is 'an offbeat leisure activity for the historically curious'. And that curiosity has literally unearthed all manner of objects, some mundane, others rare or costly, which provide fascinating windows into the past.

Heather Falvey

Wild Wales

George Borrow

Gwasg Carreg Gwalch, Llanrwst 2021
ISBN 978-1-84524-451-4 £15

Even by my own low standards, this review is late. One hundred and sixty years late in fact. George Borrow's *Wild Wales* was first published in 1862 and consists of the author's reminiscences and reflections of a tour made in 1854. But this is a new edition and I commend it to you.

Many people know the title - in fact the words 'wild' and 'Wales' are often lumped together in the media and in casual conversation. But how many of us have actually opened the book and savoured its varied delights?

Borrow was over fifty years of age when he embarked upon the walking tour which became Wild Wales, a journey which began when he went to stay in Llangollen with his wife and stepdaughter. He was an established author, a talented linguist, and a man with a deep thirst for knowledge. His journey took him through North Wales and thence via Cardiganshire and Carmarthenshire to the south, concluding in Chepstow, in his search for the true spirit of Wales and the Welsh.

But what is Wild Wales really about and why should anyone read it now? Primarily it is about the author himself, and over the course of nearly five hundred pages one gets to know him well. He is a man of strong opinions, deep passions and a massive capacity for conversation. He is a little bit pretentious, sometimes rather rude, occasionally patronising. But he is also very proud of his linguistic skills, he loves the ancient poetry and culture of Wales, and he is endlessly fascinated by the lives of people he meets on his walks.

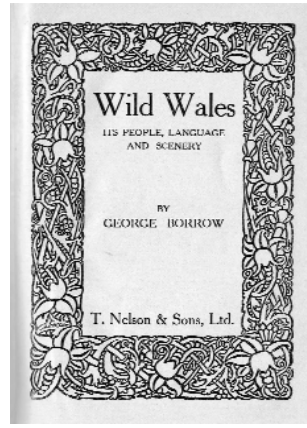
The book is an excellent - if subjective - portrait of Wales in the mid-nineteenth century. For anyone who lives in the places Borrow visited, there is a delight in viewing the familiar landscape through his eyes. For anyone who loves Wales the book provides a series of vivid vignettes of life in that country in the 1850s. Borrow's focus is extraordinary - who could forget the story of the persecuted Anglican cat, the old lady flavouring her ale with wormwood, Borrow's alarm when a drunken wedding party pursue him down the road mocking him for his 'Gog' (Northern) way of speaking Welsh and then for his English? We feel his outrage, his fear, but always too, his fascination, throughout his work.

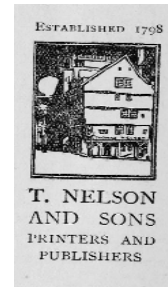
No-one need read the book in one go; it is a splendid volume into which to dip.

This publication appears to be a facsimile of the 1907 edition of the book by John Murray, and includes illustrations by Scottish artist and illustrator A.S.Hartrick which appeared in that edition. Unfortunately they have not reproduced well. But that should not stop you purchasing the volume. All the best pictures in its pages are in words.

Helen Palmer

The title page of the editor's copy (undated) - this beautiful woodcut border is the only illustration apart from the attractive publisher's imprint logo at the back (right) JH



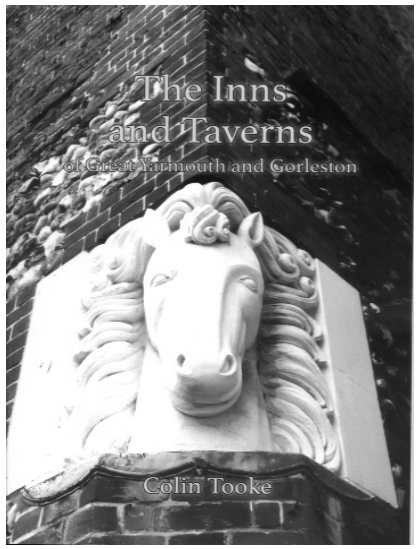


The Inns and Taverns of Great Yarmouth and Gorleston

Colin Tooke

Poppyland Publishing 2022 203pp
ISBN: 978-909796-97-3 £10.95 + £2.95 p&p

This tour of drinking establishments of Great Yarmouth and neighbouring Gorleston provides mini-histories of each one, whether still standing or not. In his Introduction Colin Tooke explains the differences between inns, taverns and alehouses - relating to the provision of accommodation and of various types of alcoholic drink - and very briefly sketches local by-laws and a handful of the laws concerning the retailing of alcohol. He gives the numbers of establishments at various points in time, for example, 135 public houses and 23 beerhouses in 1834 and 184 and 50 respectively in 1854. During the Second World War some were bombed and others were closed permanently. Although trade did pick up again, drinking habits changed and local breweries



were absorbed by national ones. Then, of course, the Covid-19 pandemic had an unprecedented effect on pubs: in 2006 there were 78 pubs open in Great Yarmouth (including its suburbs) and 23 in Gorleston; in 2022 there were 42 and 15.

The gazetteer takes the reader around the town, starting in the Market Place (a map would have helped. An * follows the name of any establishment operating now. Entries vary in length depending on the anecdotes, reports and directory entries that the author has found. The Coachmaker's Arms, for example, (still) on the corner of St Nicholas Road, was famous for its special 'old ale' and also for 'hot purl', a favourite drink with early morning workers, when the house opened at 5.30am. The Wrestlers, on Church Plain, has changed name several times since 1691. In November 1800, Admiral Lord Nelson arrived in Yarmouth following his victory at the battle of the Nile and was taken to the Wrestlers for an official reception. Delighted by the honour of the occasion the landlady requested that in future it be called the Nelson Arms; apparently Nelson said 'That would be absurd seeing that I have but one', thus it became the Nelson Hotel. Whereas some pub buildings dated back to the medieval period, others were built (and demolished) during the twentieth century. Some of the pub names are rather quirky. In the area Tooke calls North/South Roads, many public houses and roads have/had names associated with mid-nineteenth century London: the small beerhouse known as the Crystal Palace could not have looked less like the pavilion at the Great Exhibition of 1851!

The final chapter discusses the various local breweries from the seventeenth century onwards. By about 1900 the only one left was Lacons, which had been in business for several centuries; they were taken over by Whitbread in 1965 and closed in 1968; however in 2013 the name (and the company's deep frozen yeast) was revived.

This nicely produced book has numerous illustrations, a list of (some of) the sources used and an index. Tooke states that 'The British public house has no counterpart anywhere else in the world'. Is that why so many local historians are interested in them?

Heather Falvey

Manchester Girl: Growing up in 1950s Manchester

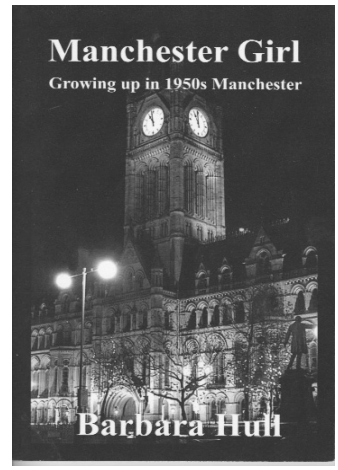
Barbara Hull
ISBN-13 979 859 4802032, 2021, 86pp
Amazon pbk £6.58 Kindle £4.99

This account of a teenaged girl's life in Manchester during the 1950's describes many characteristics that will be familiar to readers of the same generation. While Manchester was a large and cosmopolitan city the aspirations and limitations faced by these young people applied elsewhere too.

The author, a proud Mancunian now living in north Yorkshire, explores her memories of food, clothes, houses, education, leisure activities and much more. Although a very personal tale of one person in one place, the details could be useful also for comparative purposes. In addition, it has been used as a trigger at reminiscence sessions with Alzheimer's sufferers, surely a most important application.

It is disappointing that there is no index, no maps, and no illustrations. The book itself contains no publication date, no ISBN and no price. The self-publishing facilities available today allow authors to share their writing so easily and widely, but the broader value and interest is restricted without these.

JH



While out walking ... 13

Well, more of a deliberate dropping by, really. On my way to give a lecture I called in to see my subject - or rather, to see once again the monument that my subject erected to two of his children. He was Thomas Crockford, vicar of Fisherton Delamere in south Wiltshire from 1613 to 1634. His church is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust, and his riverside village is idyllic. I helped to publish his parish registers in 2020,* which were augmented by candid comments about his parishioners (all written in Latin, which they would not have understood). In doing so I came to know and respect the man himself, and so in a strange way to share the grief that he and his wife felt, and to which the monument gave expression.

The eye first catches the depictions of the two infants, the shrouded boy, the swaddled girl. And then you glance at the forest of Latin, sprinkled with familiar words - *uxoris, natus, sepulta* - to be found on epitaphs everywhere. But now look more closely, and work at it. Remember those far off days of Horace and Vergil and learning Latin metre. The first six lines are a poem, three elegiac couplets (alternate hexameters and pentameters) - an expertly constructed elegy, by a scholar. Then follow the prosaic details. Here is a rough translation:

No name was attached to you, son, and you,
Daughter, are written Alice in the records;
But in the book of life you both as equals
have a name,
Which God recognises is sufficient for you.
You, boy, have seen no light, and you, girl,
only a small amount
On earth, but the light of heaven is extended
to you both.

Infant boy and infant girl, first son and third daughter of Thomas Crockford, vicar, and of Joan his wife. The stillborn boy was buried on Sunday 1 September 1622; the girl, two months old, was buried on Wednesday 26 May 1624.

Crockford chronicled for posterity the virtues and vices of his flock with sensitivity, compassion and sometimes censure. He has left us historians a tremendous resource - many hundreds of thumbnail biographies. But none has the poignancy of this memorial to his own personal loss.

John Chandler

*Wiltshire Record Society, vol. 73, reviewed in *The Local Historian* vol. 51 (2), Apr. 2021, 155

Correspondence (2)

David Wright has written in response to Richard Hoyle's article in *LHN* 143 p 17

Richard Hoyle makes some very good points on pdf publication and preservation. An advantage that he does not mention is that the conversion of a printed book into searchable pdf often makes it a more valuable tool than the unindexed or inadequately indexed original; existing non-searchable pdfs can generally be converted.

Republication of old works in pdf format is relatively cheap and easy but is not always the best way of dealing with mass information.

A few years ago I looked at a rating list printed in 1823. It constituted much the best source of facts about the people and buildings of the town in question at that date, but it had been little used by local historians. The book was photocopied and could easily have put it into searchable pdf, but it seemed to me that this would be of limited value for local history purposes. Instead I converted its contents to HTML, which meant that it could be put online for simple reference but could also be also be pasted into a spreadsheet and then, as necessary, turned into a database to permit complex queries: see https://www.louthlincs1838.org.uk/1823-rating-list-r1823/.



BALH Regional Conference

Unexpected Sources for Local History

Saturday 22 October 2022,
10am-4pm
St Andrew's Church Hall,
Taunton, TA2 7BW



William Cecil presiding over the Court of Wards c1585 (Wikipedia)

We are delighted that, at last, this first BALH regional conference since the pandemic can take place. Originally scheduled for March 2020 it is only about 30 months delayed!

Speakers looking at unexpected local history sources include Paul Dryburgh, Lucy Browne, Mark Forrest, David Killingray and Jonathan Mackman covering topics from travel diaries to the Court of Wards and Liveries and local politics to taxation records.

Local society stalls, book sales and exhibitions are also planned.

Ticket prices, booking details and more information about the programme will be available soon. Look on our website and social media for updates.

www.balh.org.uk/events

Outreach Update

After the huge challenges of the last two years, it is great to be getting back to some normality with local history festivals and events taking place again. The BALH Outreach Team are keen to 'get out there' and share what we do and how we can support local historians and groups.

In May our former Trustee, Winifred Stokes, attended the **Sunderland History Fair** on behalf of the BALH. I was able to support her with up-to-date publicity materials but otherwise she did worked independently, from making the booking to staffing the stall. She writes:

The event was a great success for the organisers and pleasant for the stallholders most of whom hadn't met their counterparts in person for at least two years. The sun shone and the outdoor events brought in many who would probably not otherwise have attended. To those who knew what the BALH was I extolled the new developments over the pandemic period; to those who didn't I explained what we do and distributed our leaflet.

The Sunday after our very successful Local History Day at Conway Hall, London, I took a BALH stall to the **Manchester Histories Festival** at Manchester Monastery, Gorton. It was a great day with over 450 people attending and whilst I spoke to a handful of society and individual BALH members the majority had never heard of the BALH, which really demonstrates the value of events like this.



We have stalls booked at the **Lambeth Heritage Festival** in September, the **Huddersfield Local and Family History Fair** in October and a virtual booth at the FHF **Really Useful Family History Show** in November. If you know of any events you think we should be at let me know at outreach@balh.org.uk.

See Supplement page 1 for some dates

Stephen Miller is BALH Outreach Co-ordinator

Local History Hour

Since the last News we have had a further *Local History Hour* with Cheryl Butler and Jackie Wilkinson discussing sixteenth century women, focussing on Hampshire, and including a study using the records of Winchester Consistory Court. This is now the second Hour we have hosted on women specifically, following from Sarah-Jayne Ainsworth and Imogen Dudley's talks in 2021 on seventeenth century women in south-west England. It ties also to our Local History Day talk in May by Janina Ramirez on medieval women. The recovery of women's lives in local history is important and we hope we have been able to provide advice and inspiration for our members.

For those who missed the talks or would like a reminder of them we provide summaries on the BALH blog, including reading and resource suggestions. You can find details of these and other upcoming BALH talks on the Events page of our website.

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

We are looking now at the schedule for 2023. Please do get in touch if you know of an excellent local history speaker we ought to host.

Currently, *Local History Hour* is taking a summer break. We will be returning to brighten your evenings as they shorten and grow cold. In October we will be joined by Jane Howells, Alan Crosby and Ruth Newman who will be discussing working-class writing in the nineteenth century. In November we have talks by David Killingray and Roger Ottewill on nineteenth and twentieth century parish pump politics. In December the BALH team will be hosting the second David Dymond memorial winter lecture, welcoming a distinguished academic to speak to us *(see right)*.

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

The BALH Dymond Lecture 2022

In 2021 BALH was proud to announce the launch of a new annual lecture, held each winter, to welcome a distinguished academic to share their research with us. We hope this will become a highlight of our annual calendar of events for our members to enjoy.

The lecture has been named in honour of Dr David Dymond, who died in August 2021. David had been closely involved with the British Association for Local History for many years including serving as a council member, trustee, vice-chair, chair and vice-president.

Dr Alan Crosby, editor of *The Local Historian* paid tribute to David's 'unique and remarkable contribution to local history in Britain, as a researcher, writer, teacher and guide, at each of which he excelled. He was a great man - kind and generous, at once courteous and yet with an inner steel which was evident in his criticisms of pretentious, pompous and shallow work. Speaking in his measured tones on almost any subject, he could hold an audience spellbound, leavening erudition with dry wit and gentle humour. David's influence upon British local history was of major importance. His seminal book on the practice of local history, now in its fourth incarnation as *Researching and Writing History: A Guide for Local Historians*, is an essential work.'

Our first Lecture was given on an evening in early December 2021 by Professor Andrew Hopper who kindly agreed to speak about his research on the human costs of the British Civil Wars of the seventeenth century. It was hosted by our President, Professor Caroline Barron via Zoom.

The second Dymond Lecture will be held in early December 2022, again via Zoom. The event will be free for BALH members with a small charge for non-members (reduced for members of our member societies).

Look out for the initial online announcement of this year's speaker, their topic and the date of the lecture during the summer. A print notice will follow in the September edition of *Local History News.* We are excited to host another lecture of excellent academic quality and look forward to revealing more information to our members in due course.

The power of traditional folk music

Alan Crosby

The recent celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of the birth of Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958) included reflection on his role in the 'folk song revival' of the beginning of the 20th century. RVW and an influential group of friends and colleagues, including Cecil Sharp, made it their mission, perhaps their crusade, to capture as much as possible of the fast-disappearing legacy of England's traditional song and music. Travelling around the country (or at least the south and the east) in the two decades before the First World War, they transcribed and recorded songs and music in villages and countryside, preserving for posterity at least some of that rich but endangered inheritance.

Much of what they encountered eventually found its way into their own compositions, either reworked and orchestrated as, for example, folk song suites and other 'improved' versions, or more subtly in the character and feel of their music more generally. The often exquisite and haunting melodies, the verses of telling of love and loss, triumph and tragedy, could be polished and refined to produce music of great beauty. The original recordings are very different - unpolished, raw, common, perceived by some as vulgar or crude. Contemporary critics were often dismissive of such material as being not 'proper' music, unworthy and inferior, the product of ignorant and unlettered people.

But more than a century later, to listen to those scratchy and rudimentary recordings is a remarkable and unique experience. The elderly villagers and grizzled farm labourers, former fishermen and ancient blacksmiths, sang to the visiting gentlemen (and must surely have wondered what it was all about). They sang the songs that they had known all their lives, learned from oral tradition rather than the printed word or sheets of musical notation, songs and melodies inherited from previous generations. Some of these singers were in their 80s, so listening to those primitive recordings of the Edwardian period we are able to hear the voices of people born when George IV was king. The unaccompanied performances, with cracked and wobbly high notes and unreliable tunefulness, have an emotional immediacy which is tremendously powerful and evocative.

We hear those age-old tales of shepherds and milkmaids, of pressganged sailors and soldiers gone to war, of illicit liaisons and overvigorous blacksmiths, of child marriage and lively courtship. They draw upon everyday life, sometimes romanticising it, sometimes presenting a stark reality. Ever since the time when the collectors were on their rounds there have been debates and discussions about that vexed question of authenticity. These songs and tunes had very many variations - between different singers, different locations and different contexts. Generally, there was no single 'true' version - as with recipes for traditional foods, you always believed that yours, the one you learned from a parent or grandparent, was the genuine article.

During the nineteenth century the moralising of churchmen and the drive for 'respectability' led to the cleaning-up of key aspects of popular culture, and the imposition or substitution of more decorous and innocent forms. Harvest festivals, rose queens and patriotic songs began to eclipse the more spontaneous and



subversive traditional community celebrations. The highly suggestive or overtly explicit words of folk songs underwent such 'improvement', including those in the published versions which began to appear in broadsides and printed ballads from the early decades of the century onwards. What went down joyously well after a lot of cider had been consumed at the end of harvest was not likely to be suitable for a respectable church tea party.

The local history of traditional music and song is perhaps under-appreciated. I remember David Hey talking about the well-known ballad, 'The oak and the ash', the lament of the North Country maid who to London had strayed. He relished the line, 'Oh the oak and the ash and the bonnie ivy tree, They flourish at home in my own country', arguing that here the word 'country' equates to the French 'pays', the unofficial but unmistakeable area to which one belongs and identifies and has a deep attachment. It's probably a Northumbrian ballad, though others argue for a Westmorland origin. The local identity is emphatic, however: 'the lad that I wed / Must be North Country bred /And must carry me back to my North Country home'.

Trustee profile

I often feel that local history acts as my daily compass, a means by which to navigate the present. A little fanciful, perhaps, but the idea is an appealing one. The buildings and landscape of our towns and villages are a culmination of all that has gone before and, in this sense, the past does indeed live on into the present. I know that my life would be a lot poorer without local history, and especially without a sharing of ideas with like-minded people!

I came to BALH as a trustee via the Association of Local History Tutors (ALHT) when the two organisations joined forces in 2009. When family commitments later became pressing, I stepped-back from trustee and committee membership for a short while until joining the Outreach Committee in 2017.

My academic background is in landscape history, first as an undergraduate at the University of East Anglia followed by post-graduate study at the University of Reading. My working life started out with Oxfordshire Local Studies before moving to the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments for England (RCHME), initially within the National Library of Air Photographs at Swindon.

Some thirty-plus years and several roles later, I continue to work for RCHME's successors, English Heritage and now Historic England. I've enjoyed a varied career encompassing teaching, exhibition management, and community programmes. All have provided wonderful opportunities to work with groups across many areas of England, and throughout I have witnessed the power of local history to inspire, enrich, enlighten, transform and unite.

I currently manage the Heritage Gateway, a portal website that brings together the national overview of historic environment information in England. I am working along-side Historic England's digital team to replace the existing, now out-dated, website with a new accessible modern platform.

My own research interests are focussed on rural change and enclosure 1750 -1850, particularly within the Vale of White Horse, Oxfordshire and into north Wiltshire. I am working towards Associateship of the Museums Association (when time allows!). I am a long-term member and former Chair of the Community Archives and Heritage Group (CAHG) and an Associate Board Member of Kirklees Local TV, a community interest media-platform company.

Jane Golding

Heritage Open Days 2022

9 - 18 September

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

Notes News Issues

Jane Howells

Local History Day 2022

We hope everyone who joined us on 11 June enjoyed the day. Whether you came to London in person or attended the online version it was very rewarding to know so many members and friends wanted to participate in our major annual event. As you can read on page 14, creating a stimulating and efficient hybrid event is hard work and needs the expert skills of many people. Thank you to everyone concerned.

BALH Annual General Meeting

The new Board of Trustees is named overleaf. Thank you to the retiring members, Virginia Bainbridge, Claire Cross and Winifred Stokes.

Local History Day 2023

Next year's LHD is under active discussion, further details will be shared when available. Put the date in your diary as soon as you hear.

LHN archive

Sadly the 'official' archive set of *Local History News* is not complete. Issues 26 to 37 are missing. Please do get in touch if you have any of those and would be prepared to donate them, or lend for copying. *editor.lhn@balh.org.uk*

1921 Census

The most popular BALH digital webinar ever was 'The 1921 census: opportunities for local history' first held earlier in the year. This will be repeated on 6 September, for booking go to www.balh.org.uk/events. Jessamy Carlson from the National Archives will again explain and illustrate the vast riches of this resource to inform and inspire local history research.

Correspondence

Another thank you, this time to Ann and David who wrote in response to articles in the last issue. It is always good to hear from readers with comments, suggestions and questions.

In the next issue of LHN

We will have news from Cornwall, CILIP Local Studies Group's Toolkit, the bicentenary of Hetton Colliery, profiles of another OIC award recipient and another BALH Trustee, the Association's growing digital activities, and much more of interest.

Local History 40 years ago

Contd from page 18

So much has changed in the last forty years, but there are some very familiar comments which remain relevant.

We use the same types of sources, some on the internet at home these days, but many still require a visit to the local library and the record office. The advice 'always try to find out what other people may have done about your area' still holds good, as does getting in touch with your local society.

In the bibliography look at the comment about W G Hoskins *The Making of the English Landscape* 'essential reading for pleasure, and the foundation of a new and fruitful approach to local history'; indeed. There's David Dymond's vital book *Writing Local History: a practical guide*, now in its fourth edition. Then *The Local Historian* (this slightly predates the formation of BALH), but it remains crucial for 'how to sample what other people are doing' and of course 'all working local historians should subscribe'!

For how BALH grew from the Standing Conference for Local History, see Michael Cowan's article in *The Local Historian* Vol 37 No 1 Feb 2007 (available on our website).

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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)

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David Moore, the BALH Local History Photographer of the Year (Sandfields Pumping Station)



Madeline Davies, aged 14, the BALH Young Local History Photographer of the Year (Druid on the ruins, Shugborough Hall)

LOCAL HISTORY PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR 2022

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Local History News

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Supplement

2022

Saturday 22 October	**BALH Regional Conference Taunton** 'Unexpected Sources for Local History' *(see page 31 for more information)*

BALH will be at:

Saturday 2 September	**Lambeth Local History Festival**
Saturday 17 September	**Bristol and Avon Family History Fair**
Saturday 1 October	**Oxfordshire Family History Fair**
Saturday 15 October	**Huddersfield Family and Local History Fair**
Fri 11 - Sat 12 November	**FHF Really Useful Family History Show**

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

BALH
BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR LOCAL HISTORY

BALH Awards for Local Historians

OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The purpose of this award is to honour publicly local historians of all ages who have made outstanding and significant voluntary contributions to the subject in their own areas and more widely. Such contributions might include raising awareness of the subject or developing innovative ways of collecting and disseminating research into local history. It is intended that the awards should embrace as wide a spectrum of activity in local history as possible.

The most important thing the recipients have in common is their enthusiasm for local history and their ability and inclination to share this with others.

Nominations may be made by anyone who feels they recognise such a contribution, using the form here in *Local History News*, or on our website at www.balh.org.uk/awards. Nominations are considered by the Awards Panel made up of experienced local historians who are members of the Association's Board of Trustees or one of its advisory committees. Up to six awards are made annually. Awards certificates are normally presented at Local History Day in June.

The nominator is responsible for submitting the nomination form and for ensuring that the two referees each complete the reference form available on the website (if necessary, please ask for a paper copy). References each require 300-500 words in support of the nomination outlining how, in the experience of the referee, the nominated local historian deserves this recognition. Those three forms should arrive together by post to BALH(A) 7 St Marks Road, Salisbury SP1 3AY or by email editor.lhn@balh.org.uk between 1 July and 31 December. Please do not send any additional material.

If you have not received an acknowledgement within three weeks please contact the BALH Office admin@balh.org.uk

Please see inside front cover for further details of the

BALH Awards for Local Historians for
Research & Publication
and for a Society Newsletter.

BALH
BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR LOCAL HISTORY

AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS

NOMINATION FORM FOR AN AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTION (see notes)

Nominators are responsible for completing this form clearly, and for ensuring two referees each submit a reference on the reference form available on the website at www.balh.org.uk/awards or paper on request to email address below.

A. Person Nominated

Full name
Address
Email

B. Nomination made by

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

C. Referees
Name, address, email, of TWO referees who have been asked to complete the reference form.

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

SIGNED	DATE

Completed nomination form and references from two referees should be sent to editor.lhn@balh.org.uk or BALH(A) 7 St Marks Road, Salisbury between 1 July and 31 December.

PTO

E. Short Citation

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

F. Extended Citation

Please provide a longer piece of no more than 200 words about the nominee. Both citations may be published to share the achievements of Award recipients.

Completed nomination form and references from two referees should be sent to editor.lhn@balh.org.uk or BALH(A) 7 St Marks Road, Salisbury between 1 July and 31 December.