Local History News

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AWARDS FOR LOCAL HISTORIANS

- *To encourage research and publication*
  One or more certificates may be awarded each year for a published **article** presenting sound original research in well-written form. To be eligible a piece of work, of any length, must appear in a journal, newsletter or similar publication produced by a local voluntary body, which is sent to Heather Falvey the Reviews Editor for review or listing. All relevant material sent to the Reviews Editor is automatically considered, and a short-list prepared for the Awards Panel.

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

- *To encourage societies to share information locally*
  An annual award for newsletters used by local societies to correspond with their members and other interested readers. Newsletters can be of any length, published at any regular interval, in any style, by any printing method. The contents, and the clarity of communication, are the key factors rather than the glossiness of production. All newsletters sent to the Reviews Editor will be considered for this award, the final decision for which lies with the Publications Committee of the BALH.

Awards are presented at the Local History Day each June

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Front cover

Jack Atkinson - father and son at Copt Hill Bankfoot on the Hetton Colliery Railway c 1900: Courtesy of the J R Cook Collection, see article page 9

Local History News

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How to contribute

The success of the Association in supporting and promoting local history throughout the country depends very much on contributions made by members, readers, and all those interested and concerned.

Material published in *The Local Historian* is written by a wide variety of people from many different backgrounds. Offers and suggestions for articles are welcomed, and the editor, Alan Crosby, is always pleased to discuss ideas for contributions and to advise on their preparation. 'Notes for contributors' is available on request, and can be found on our website. Dr Alan Crosby, 77 Wellington St, Preston PR1 8TQ email: agcrosby@waitrose.com

Local History News relies on material - articles, news, pictures, questions etc - from local societies and individual local historians. Please put BALH Office c/o Moore Insight, St James House, Vicar Lane, Sheffield S1 2EX on the mailing list for your society newsletter and similar regular publications. Information about local initiatives is particularly welcome, and we are always keen to publish items that give examples of best practice, illustrating the diversity and vitality of local history. Readers' comments and queries allow our members to share their knowledge and enthusiasm. If there is a specific event you wish us to mention please allow plenty of time ahead of the date. The mailings are normally sent out at the end of January, April, July and October, with deadlines at the beginning of the previous months.

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

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for all parts of the Association,
messages are forwarded promptly to the right person

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That list

Alan Crosby

The list seems to grow ever longer - by which I mean the list of papers which I have researched but not written, articles which at the moment are half-finished or merely a few ideas jotted down, books that I want to complete (or to start), and topics where even the research has not yet begun but which interest or intrigue me. In days of yore there was an actual list on a sheet of paper, and a cardboard folder bearing the title 'IDEAS and PROJECTS'. Now there's a folder on the computer, 'PUBLICATIONS PROJECTS', which at the last count had almost 40 files of material, ranging from half-written books to odd notes and scans of documents and lists of sources or references. It gives me great satisfaction to look at the folder contents and to think of all those fascinating papers and definitive books on such a wide range of important and illuminating subjects, a satisfaction which is instantly diminished to zero by the realisation that they all remain future and usually distant possibilities rather than present realities. I just need to find the time to write them!

From time to time I'm asked questions such as 'What's your specialism' or 'What's your period', and it always seems a bit feeble to answer 'No specialism, no specific period'. I genuinely find all historical periods interesting, including the pre-historical archaeology-based ones, and I have no specialism because there's simply so much that appeals, fascinates and rewards. The list considered above includes research which has been completed or is in progress on, for example, an unsuccessful Preston cotton manufacturer, a cotton mill on the River Slaney in County Wexford, music in a Lancashire country house in the 1730s, locative surnames in medieval Banbury, an 18th century recipe book, the demography of coal-mining in East Cheshire in the mid-Victorian period, and the Swedish siege of Kraków in 1655. No specialism, therefore - all these topics (and many more besides) have gripped my attention, I have thoroughly enjoyed the research and piecing together the 'story', and for most of them I have at least an outline sketched, albeit perhaps in my head rather than on paper or hard-drive.

Surely, we have all been in this position? As local and regional historians, we must often have come across material by accident, when looking for evidence and information on a specific but completely different topic. I know of many occasions when the documents which I encountered *en passant* seemed much more interesting than the ones I was actually researching. Constantly tempted to stray from the straight and narrow pathway, beckoned down tantalising byways of research - it's a wonder that I have ever managed to complete anything. Sometimes, only a steadfast determination to see the damned thing in print has forced me to finish the paper, the research note, the book.

This summer I was working in the archives of a major landed estate on the west coast of Scotland. I had a clear research brief - this was a project on behalf of the estate itself, and it involved looking at mid-19th century estate accounts, estate management records and correspondence. It was particularly interesting work, in a wonderful location, and I had a great time. But whenever I searched the online and paper catalogues my eye was caught by new potential diversions and distractions.

No matter that to discover and become familiar with the context and background would obviously take months of hard work, and indeed it was highly likely that a more local and knowledgeable historian had already trodden those archival pathways. I was almost seduced by the temptations of documents about clan warfare in the 1680s and 1690s, lead-mining in the 1860s, the hunt for coal in the Inner Hebrides, railways through Argyllshire that were proposed but never built, crofts and clachans, tenement housing in small towns, and the future of the fisheries in the Edwardian period. Just so many papers to be written … but so far, I have resisted that folly, so it's back to the existing list. Where to begin …



A valued and highly respected authority

Cecil Amor

Now a stalwart and highly regarded figure of the local history scene in south west Dorset, Cecil Amor hails from the neighbouring county of Wiltshire. He was born in Rowde, attended Devizes Grammar School and then became an apprentice with Westinghouse Brake & Signal Company in Chippenham. Further study led to Cecil becoming a Chartered Electrical Engineer, and the final post in his varied career was as a Design Officer with the Design Council in London. On retirement he moved to Bridport in Dorset.

Cecil already had a long-standing interest in local history and had been researching his family history for many years. They had been in Bromham since the early 17th century, all of two miles from Rowde! Bridport Museum was running afternoon meetings on local history and when the curator had to spend less time on that, Cecil became founder chairman of the enthusiastic group that took over, a role he held for 20 years. He is now Bridport History Society Honorary President. He is also an active member of the West Dorset Group of the Somerset & Dorset Family History Society, where he has served on the committee.

Cecil has wide ranging interests and has contributed to nearly every issue of the History Society's Journal, researching and writing on a wide variety of subjects including stone circles, Bridport's rope and net industry, Bridport Harbour, shipbuilding at West Bay, and Bridport Quakers. His article on the latter topic, published in Dorset Notes & Queries corrected a number of errors on early Quakers in Bridport. An article was about lime kilns; identifying one for an evening visit resulted in many more discoveries.

To spread the word about local history, and history in general, even further, he contributes monthly articles on the subject for the Marshwood Vale Magazine. This is a popular free community magazine distributed throughout West Dorset, South Somerset and East Devon.

Cecil was the first chairman of the Bridport Heritage Forum, established by West Dorset Research Centre and Bridport Museum in 2002 to promote and protect the heritage of Bridport and the surrounding area. Amongst the activities carried out under his guidance

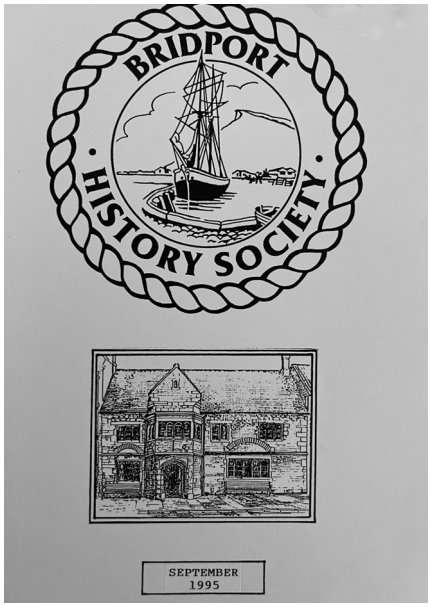


Bridport History Society held a well-attended special meeting, in July (in the heatwave), in Bridport Town Hall, to celebrate their 25th anniversary, belated due to the lockdown. A local group, 'Rough Assembly', played, sang and talked about 'Migration'. During the interval Bridport Town Mayor, Ian Bark, presented Cecil Amor with his BALH award certificate, which had been framed. Drinks and cake were enjoyed, before the band played again. photo Carlos Gueritas

and expertise have been an exhibition the history of the rope and net industry, with accompanying walk around the town; and a weekend D-Day anniversary event with seminars on military and home front history and local re-enactors.

Cecil is a valued and highly respected authority within the local community. Bridport History Society members are inordinately proud of what he has achieved, and he is an inspiration to them all.

With thanks to Cecil Amor, Celia Martin, Bill Holden and Jane Fernetzi-Sheppard



The cover of the first issue of BHS magazine. The upper image is the society's logo, a ship painted by a local artist surrounded by rope - for obvious reasons in Bridport. The lower picture is an old representation of the Museum building.

https://bridportandwestbay.co.uk/event-organizer/bridport-history-society/

Award for a Society Newsletter 2022

As reported in *Local History News* 144 (p 16) Chadderton Historical Society's quarterly newsletter *The Griffin* received the Newsletter Award for 2022.

They have written to describe the local event which was held to mark this acheievment:

Members of Chadderton Historical Society were invited to meet the Mayor of Oldham Metropolitan Borough, Councillor Elaine Garry, on 27th July 2022, at the Civic Centre, Oldham. A copy of the latest Newsletter, as well as that considered by the BALH in its citation, were given to the Mayor.

Over coffee and croissants, an informal discussion covered the background history to the Society, which was formed in 1975, its friendliness, and the many varied activities in which it is engaged. These comprise involvement with the wider community, including schools, and also the publication of diverse books, booklets and pamphlets. The Mayor was particularly fascinated with the Society's History and Mystery Ghost Walk, which takes the public on a ramble around central Chadderton, this incorporating numerous macabre incidents and events from the past.

The morning's visit was a fitting climax to what the Society considers a very prestigious acknowledgement of its significant role in the local community and its history.

In the photograph (see back cover) with the Mayor are, from left to right, member Les Garner, the Mayor's Consort Councillor Graham Shuttleworth, who is a councillor for Chadderton South Ward, Society Chairman Mark Johnson, proudly displaying the framed BALH certificate, Secretary Michael Lawson, member Arthur Chorley, and Christine Dennis, Vice-Chairperson.

Getting Local Studies Libraries tooled up for the future

CILIP Local Studies Group

What should happen after a local historian finishes their primary research, writes it up and publishes it? Though fame and fortune may be the right answer, most of us have to settle for a nice warm feeling that our work will entertain and inform all those who encounter it and that it will be a building-block for those who follow us in the years ahead. But how will your work be found in a few years' time? How can you access the work of those who come before you, together with other published resources such as maps and newspapers?

Our answer is the local studies collection at your local library, which is managed by local studies librarians who, together with assistants and volunteers, are charged with collecting, caring and helping readers use books, newspapers, photographs, maps, directories, family history websites and a plethora of other material about their local area. Not only do they make things available, but a good local studies librarian will also use their collections to engage people from widely different backgrounds and across the generations. As we well know, once people start to know the stories from their community's past, they can be hooked for life.

The Local Studies toolkit has been designed to guide and inspire all those who work in local studies, whether they are librarians and volunteers starting on their first role and who need to know about the basics, those who are looking for ideas for their next project, someone who needs to quickly check a fact or the person who has just opened up a long-ignored cupboard and is faced by a collection of oral history on reel-to-reel tapes and wants to know what they should do next. We also hope that it will be of use to the wider heritage world, including those leading community archives, working in record offices and researchers who want to find the gems hidden in local studies collections. The project has been organised by the Local Studies Group of CILIP, the library and information association, and peer reviewed by some of the best local studies professionals in the country.



The Local Studies Toolkit is a free online guide containing nearly fifty sections covering a number of themes including:

•Relationships - how best to work with volunteers, community groups and fellow heritage professionals. It also discusses different types of readers and the help that we can give them.

•Creating and running big projects - exploring how to decide what type of project is appropriate to you and your collection, finding out what your target audience wants, financial planning, working with partners and evaluation.

•Marketing and promotion, including the use of social media, what makes a good exhibition and how to run a virtual event.

•Resources - how to organise, collect and exploit material that you will find in a local studies library, including maps, directories, books, sound recordings, oral history, photographs, indexes, transcriptions and newspapers.

There are also sections on copyright, how to design a local studies space, conservation, local studies in Scotland and most importantly, why local studies matters.

Each section includes information and advice on a particular subject, links to examples of different projects that have used that resource in an interesting way and signposts to where

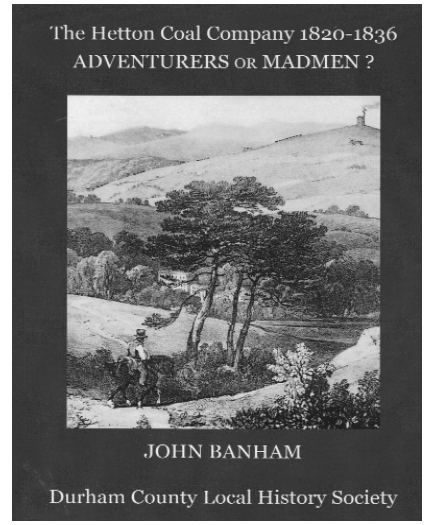
you can find out more information online or in print.

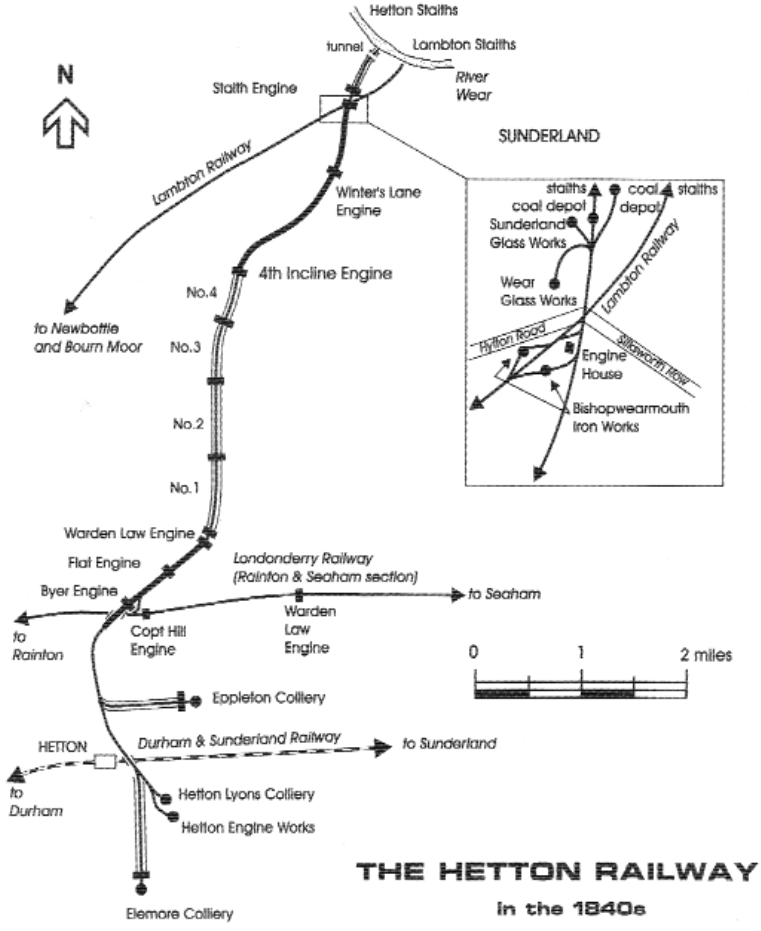
The Local Studies Toolkit was formally launched at a conference at the National Archives in Kew on Friday 21 October.

Though we have just published the last planned section of the toolkit, it has been designed to be ever evolving, with everyone who uses the website being encouraged to suggest new examples of best practice and subject that need to be more fully explored.

View it now at
https://lslibrarians.wordpress.com/toolkit/

with thanks to Tony Pilmer and Julie Davis





The Hetton Adventure - railways in the making

John Banham

Hetton le Hole, NE of Durham City in the historical county of Durham and now part of the city of Sunderland, is the focus of a significant community effort to celebrate the bicentenary of an internationally important early railway designed by George Stephenson.

Opened in November 1822, the railway operated until late last century linking Hetton Lyons, Elemore and Eppleton collieries with staithes on the River Wear at Sunderland. After three years of preparation and supported by a wide range of partners, including Sunderland City Council and Durham County Council, the focus of the celebrations will be a bicentenary conference on November 19th and 20th this year.

The Hetton Colliery Railway is an internationally important development in the early history of railways because it was designed and built as a steam railway to serve a new colliery. Up to 1815 all 'railway' development had taken place on existing wooden and later cast iron wagonways. The increasing demand for coal put pressure on these wagonways to improve their capacity, and coal owners and their agents (known as Viewers) responded with the introduction of rope haulage, either by steam stationary engines hauling uphill or by inclines worked by gravity, where the weight of full waggons going downhill pulled empty waggons uphill. Another alternative for hauling coal, the steam locomotive, which had previously been tried in South Wales and Yorkshire, was developed after 1815 in North East England, notably by a group of colliery engineers based at Killingworth and led by George Stephenson.

In 1820 a scheme was proposed to sink a colliery for the first time through Magnesian Limestone strata at Hetton le Hole, seven miles south of the River Wear at Sunderland. Here the initiative was taken not by powerful coal owners but by shareholders in a company called The Hetton Coal Company. These 'adventurers' as they were called were led by an elderly bankrupt named Arthur Mowbray. Mowbray's 'extraordinary talent' ensured that sinking began on 19th December 1820 and although the work encountered serious difficulties with water and quicksand, coal was reached on 3rd September 1822.

With no access to other wagonways in the area, the Hetton Coal Company had to build its own line to Sunderland, where its coal could be loaded on to London-bound colliers. The resulting railway, designed by George Stephenson, was the first in the world to be built on a green-field route. The first section from Hetton was flat enough to use George Stephenson's steam locomotives, from where two steam stationary engines took the wagons to the summit of the line at Warden Law, 636ft (194m) above sea level. From here four self-acting inclines took the wagons down to North Moor near Silksworth, where more of Stephenson's locomotives hauled trains to the River Wear. The only use of horses was on the small branch lines round the collieries. The line was opened from Hetton Lyons on 18th November 1822 with branches to Elemore Colliery added in 1827 and Eppleton Colliery in 1833 (see map opposite by the late Colin Mountford, inaugurating chair of HCR200).

The railway never carried passengers (other than the brakemen riding the chaldron wagons - see cover photograph of circa 1900); that step was taken by the longer Stockton & Darlington Railway in 1825, also designed by George Stephenson for rope haulage and locomotives (although initially horses were used to pull the passenger carriages). The southern section of the Hetton line was closed on 3rd September 1959, still largely unchanged after 127 years. In the 1930s a branch was built to connect Silksworth Colliery. This branch and the northern section of the Hetton Railway remained open until July 1972 to serve a coal depot in Sunderland.

The aim of the HCR200 charity goes beyond the bicentenary conference to promote the educational, cultural and historical importance of the Hetton Colliery Railway to the local community with publications, exhibitions, public lectures, work with local schools and a legacy film. For details of the conference to be held at Easington Lane Community Access Point on 19/20 November see:

http://www.hcr200.org/Hetton-Conference.html

John Banham is Secretary of Durham County Local History Society, which has recently published his book The Hetton Coal Company, 1820-1836: Adventurers or Madmen? *See HCR200 website for details.*

Stephen Roberts 1958 - 2022



For an all-too short period, between the summer of 2018 and summer 2019, Stephen Roberts was the Reviews Editor of *The Local Historian*, a role which he relished and which - not least because of its contact with local historians far and wide - gave him great pleasure. Sadly, he was soon forced to resign because of ill health. In July this year we learned of his death. I treasured his friendship and when I visited him at home in Sutton Coldfield our conversation was always fascinating and full of variety (from his love of 1960s and 1970s popular music to the esoteric details of working-class radicalism in the Victorian period). I was shocked by the news of his passing, and am deeply grateful to Andrew Reekes, Stephen's friend and co-author, for his permission to republish this moving tribute, which appeared on the West Midlands History website on 25 July 2022.

Alan Crosby (Editor of The Local Historian*)*

From top to toe of his not inconsiderable frame Stephen Roberts (1958-2022) was a Birmingham historian. Born and educated in Sutton Coldfield, and then studying at the University of Birmingham, he had by the time he graduated developed a passion both for Aston Villa and for the Chartists, about whom he would write, research and publish for more than forty years. His tutor at the university was Dorothy Thompson, that doyenne of Chartist Studies; she and her husband, the great historian of the working-classes, E P Thompson, welcomed Stephen into their Wick Episcopi home near Worcester and proved to be the most important cultural and intellectual influences of his life, shaping his own interest in working-class radicals, and his own sympathy for political movements of the Left.

From university he went into teaching - at Hagley Catholic High School where he was Head of History - but all the while he retained research interests at the University of Birmingham, and from the 1990s he was publishing on aspects of Chartism and Victorian history. Steadily, however, his focus came to centre on Birmingham's history. He had written an important article on 'Politics and the Birmingham Working Class' back in the early 1980s; but in his last twenty years he returned to research his beloved city, especially its Victorian incarnation; and he unearthed a rich seam of heroic and intrepid figures, which he mined energetically, for he was a prolific writer, and an excellent lecturer. Though not an active churchman, he admired the vision and humanity of ministers like George Dawson, Robert Dale and Henry Crosskey, about all of whom he wrote with great insight. But he was especially attracted to those Birmingham businessmen, pioneers of a golden age, who were later forgotten or under-appreciated, and his little *Birmingham Biographies* on Sir Richard Tangye, Joseph Gillott, James Whateley and others succeeded in rescuing a number of important Birmingham figures from what his mentor Thompson described as 'the enormous condescension of posterity'. In many ways Stephen was happiest when transported back into the company of the members of the Shakespeare Club, planning the celebration of the Bard, or discussing schemes for improving the physical and moral lives of fellow Birmingham citizens at the Arts Club, and he spoke, and wrote, with great sympathy and affection for his heroes, like Sam Timmins, John Skirrow Wright, J A Langford. He had an enviable knack of truffling in history's byways to find just that little human detail or telling anecdote which both brought them to life and made his writing so readable. These men, he felt, represented an energy, a nobility and a selflessness largely and depressingly absent two centuries on.

His research and writing was his consolation, for his last years were not easy. He was the most dutiful of carers for his mother; that and the onset of Covid, coinciding with the onset of his own health issues, severely limited his social and professional contacts. He felt that sense of isolation keenly, but he continued to publish new material to the end. He was one of the last of a generation of historians passionate about - and actively writing on - 19th-century Birmingham, and he would be pleased to think that in a number of ways he has valuably added to our knowledge and understanding of the individuals who made Birmingham the 'best governed city in the world'.

[Andrew co-authored with Stephen, George Dawson & his Circle: The Civic Gospel in Victorian Birmingham *(Merlin Press, 2021)]*

Cornwall Association of Local Historians celebrate their first forty years

Marilyn Thompson

Not even Covid has deterred members of CALH celebrating their fortieth anniversary although they had to accept a year's deferral. During the spring of 2022 our conference theme was two-fold: looking back and looking forward.

The group was formed in 1981 being largely the brainchild of Cornish historian and writer Veronica Chesher.* It was Veronica who brought local history to prominence in the county through W E A lectures and classes.

The first edition of what became the CALH *Journal* was issued in May 1981. Originally a news magazine it became a bi-annual publication until finally, a decade ago, it became an annual spring journal.

In her editorial debut Veronica set out the Society's aims and objectives. The Cornwall Association of Local Historians was to provide a meeting place for both local history societies and individuals with an interest in local history.

'The study of local history is flourishing in Cornwall and the time has come when an Association is needed to unite those interested in this subject. On February 22nd at a Local History Conference at Trelowarren, I inaugurated a new Association, to be called the Cornwall Association of Local Historians, with the aim of uniting, representing and co-ordinating the work of local historians. The Association is open to all members of local history groups together with individuals who are interested . . . '

The early news magazines were often slim publications but this year's Spring *Journal* consisted of nearly ninety pages packed with reports of summer field days; members' own projects as diverse as 'Women Cast Adrift - Penniless Cornish Women in the 19th Century' to 'Blacksmiths of Luxulyan Parish' and details of lectures given in the course of our two annual conferences.

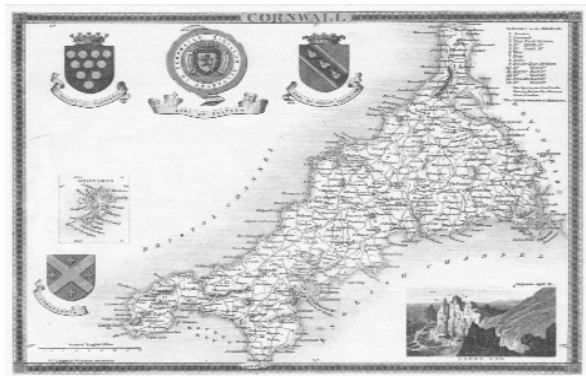
Now in its forty-first year the Association is healthy and energetic, with a membership of over 140 individuals and institutions. Continuing to be a broad church association, members range from professional historians to former teachers of history and other disciplines; those involved with museums and archives, archaeologists, writers and those who are enthused by history.

The association promotes events which enable members to meet together and discover more about the county's rich and diverse history whilst also ensuring discoveries made are safeguarded for future researchers.

This year our autumn conference will be devoted to a close examination of 'Plague and Pestilence in Cornwall and Beyond'.

It is only during our own lifetimes that the shadow of death has been removed only to return in the guise of Covid. Our forebears required indomitable will to survive and those of us whose curiosity is drawn to peeling back the layers often realise full well the cyclical nature of history.

www.cornwalllocalhistorians.co.uk



* *Veronica Chesher received a BALH Personal Achievement Award in 2004; the profile was published in LHN 73, Winter 2004, page 6.*

Visits by TNA Chief Executive Jeff James

As sector lead for the archives sector, **The National Archives** provides support, advice and training for archives across England and Wales as well as being a grant provider helping local and regional archives to catalogue their records, run events and host exhibitions where they might otherwise struggle.

In August, the National Archives' Chief Executive, Jeff James was in the South West.

He visited the Archives and Cornish Studies Service at **Kresen Kernow** in Redruth. Kresen Kernow (Cornish for Cornwall Centre) was opened in 2019, combining the Cornwall Record Office previously in Truro with the Cornish Studies Library. It was built on the site of the former Redruth Brewery and has 14 miles of shelving to store over 1.5 million records from the Record Office, the Cornish Studies Library and the Historic Environment Record, as well as exhibition spaces, learning rooms and a digitisation suite.

In August 2021, Kresen Kernow was awarded a cataloguing grant from the Archives Revealed programme run jointly by The National Archives, The Pilgrim Trust and the Wolfson Foundation for 'A Cornish camera' project to catalogue the George Ellis collection of approximately 95 000 glass plate negatives and 30 handwritten ledgers covering 1939 - 1982, a visual record of the people and communities of central and east Cornwall (see illustration below). Following on from this, in July, the service was awarded one of Historic England's 'Celebrating Working Class Histories' grants to explore the collection in relation to a project 'Bodmin at Work' using photographs to inspire people to explore the history of the town and its inhabitants.



Jeff continued his tour in Plymouth where he visited **The Box**, Plymouth's new £46m cultural destination combining the city's museum, gallery and archives. It is an imaginative extension of the existing Edwardian Museum and Art Gallery and Central Library, with its most striking feature being the elevated 'archive in the sky' 10m above street level - the highest double cantilever in the UK

The Box opened in 2020 on the 400th anniversary of the voyage of the Mayflower with its inaugural exhibition showcasing more than 300 Mayflower-related objects from collections from across the UK, USA and Netherlands, including The National Archives. The exhibition was created in partnership with the Native American Wampanoag Advisory Committee in Massachusetts and explored the early English attempts to colonise America, while acknowledging conflict with Native America and the impact of colonisation on the indigenous population.

The visit gave Jeff the opportunity to present Plymouth Archives with their certificate of full accreditation. Archive Service Accreditation is the national standard for archive service in Britain and indicates that a service has met professionally agreed standards of organisational health, the care and development of its collection and in providing and widening access.

Reflecting on his visit, Jeff said, 'I'm hugely impressed with what archives here in the South West have achieved. I know it has been a challenging time for many and the resilience, creativity and resourcefulness that staff have shown is impressive. Although very different buildings, both Kresen Kernow and The Box are bringing together the old and new into their construction and use. With the support of their communities and local authorities, both are playing a leading role in the economic, social and cultural regeneration of their communities. They share a common aim to open up archives to fresh perspectives, imaginative use and broader audiences.'

https://kresenkernow.org
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The Box, Tavistock Place, Plymouth
PL4 8AX

Contrary to what one might expect, Jeff James, the CEO and Keeper of The National Archives does not spend time every day looking at historic documents, so he was pleased to be able to do so during his visit to see Lambeth Palace Library's new building,later in August.

Lambeth Palace Library is the national library and archive of the Church of England. It was founded in 1610 under the will of Archbishop of Canterbury Richard Bancroft who bequeathed a collection of around 5,600 printed books and about 500 manuscripts. His successor, Archbishop George Abbot, who also left books and manuscripts to the Library, arranged for the first catalogue to be compiled enlisting the aid of King James I himself. All the initial donations included significant material gathered from the dispersal of the monastic libraries in the 1540s.

The library and archive is the first new building on the Grade I listed Lambeth Palace site for almost two hundred years. The eight-storeys of this low-carbon building offer space for all the collection, above ground level at avoid the risk of flooding from the Thames. The move to the new purpose-built premises has provided the opportunity to unite the archive and library collections that were in the historic but unsuitable Palace buildings with those of the former Church of England Record Centre, previously housed in a converted warehouse in Bermondsey.

Reflecting on his visit, during which he met archives and conservation staff and discussed ongoing projects to catalogue and preserve the collections, Jeff said: 'I have had a fascinating time looking at historic documents in a contemporary building. The visit reminds me that as archive services grow and evolve to keep up with archival and environmental developments, they are also safeguarding these important links to our past and to our shared history'.

In 2005 the entire Lambeth Palace Library collection received Designated status. The online printed books catalogue includes the collections of printed books, prints and periodicals, over 130,000 items, thousands of which are early printed books. In addition to the online catalogues of printed books and of archives and manuscripts, there is now a digital image library of selected images from the collections which can be browsed or searched. It includes 13,000 digitised plans of church buildings.

Members of the public can access the Library's collections by appointment. For more information about Lambeth Palace Library, please visit their website.

https://www.lambethpalacelibrary.org
Lambeth Palace Library
15 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7JT
0207 898 1400

While out walking ... 14

The statue of John Henry Manners, the 5th Duke of Rutland (1778-1857), of Belvoir Castle, by Edward Davis was exhibited at the Great Exhibition in 1851, with the intention that it would then adorn Leicester market place, as indeed it does. The unveiling there, on 28 April 1852, was a grand civic and ceremonial occasion, conducted according to the elaborate pageantry of freemasonry. Corn was symbolically strewn on the statue, oil poured on it, and salt and wine sprinkled on it. But it was the wine that stuck. The *Builder* magazine had previously commented, when it was at Crystal Palace, that 'his Grace is made to appear positively intoxicated', and surmised that the old proverb, 'as drunk as a lord', would be replaced in Leicester by 'as drunk as a duke'. And that prediction was more or less what happened - the *Builder's* verdict was even quoted by Pevsner. It doesn't help, of course, that he stands in front of a Wetherspoon's pub - and is frequently to be found with a can of lager judiciously placed in his outstretched hand.



John Chandler

Whitby Muster Rolls - maritime shipping records 1747 to 1795 go on-line

Jean Tennant

Amongst the new features on the Whitby museum website we are delighted to be able to offer a fully searchable database of the muster rolls for the very first time. The muster rolls are the surviving paperwork of for the Whitby Merchant Seamen's Hospital's regulation of the 'seaman's sixpence', an 18th century pension provision. This pension provided financial support to injured seamen and to the widows and children of seamen who died whilst serving on merchant ships. The muster rolls record a wealth of information about crews and ships, and offer an insight into merchant seamen's working lives. The museum added over 7,000 Whitby muster roll sheets to our collection in 2010.

These muster rolls were in need of repair and conservation and Whitby Museum worked in partnership with North Yorkshire County Record Office, ICON (The Institute of Conservation), and teams of volunteers on a conservation project. We are very grateful to the Thomas William Varley Roe Deceased Trust for providing the funding to allow for the purchase and conservation of these muster rolls. Most of these muster roll sheets are from the period 1747 to 1795. Since the muster rolls are in a fragile condition the original documents are not available for research. A set of high resolution images of the muster rolls have been produced as part of the conservation process. We are transcribing and indexing the information found on these images and have created an Access database so that more varied searches are possible including by crew name. Starting in 2015 our small team of volunteers had transcribed and indexed 5,000 of the muster rolls as of February 2022.

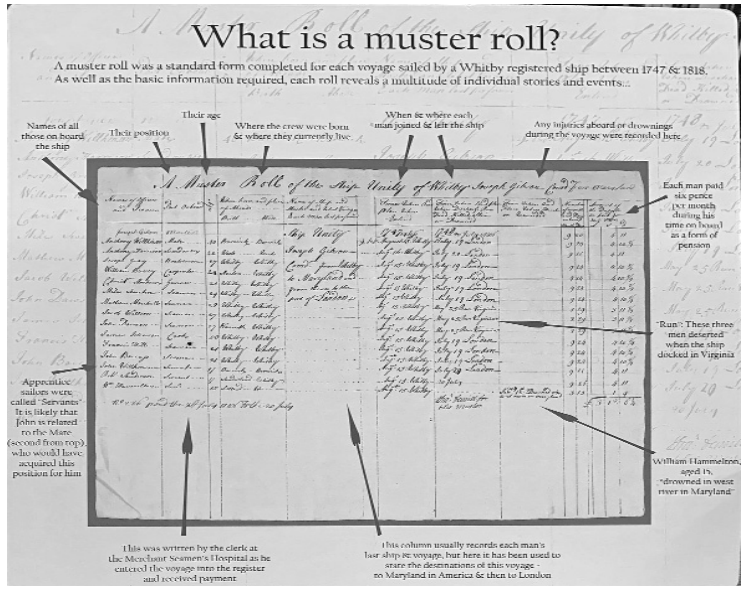
In the eighteenth century Whitby was the fifth largest port in the country even though the local population was relatively small. As a consequence people travelled from mainly coastal towns up and down the East coast, Scotland and London and even some from areas of Scandinavia to join ships in Whitby.

The new website now allows you to search the database (by ship, by captain, by crew member, their place of origin and place of residence) from the comfort of your own home and discover more about Whitby's seafaring history and possibly about your own family members who sailed out of Whitby.

Access to this information is via the Library and Archives section of the Whitby Museum website

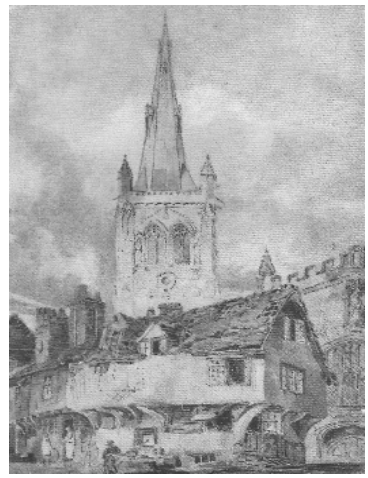
https://whitbymuseum.org.uk/muster-rolls-lookup

Jean Tennant is a volunteer at Whitby Museum, and a member of the Whitby Literary & Philosophical Society



Wellingborough, Northamptonshire Church House

Joanna Mattingly



This watercolour identified by its painter John Varley in c.1800 only as a Northamptonshire town (see *Local History News*, Number 144, Summer 2022, p 8) has now been correctly identified by Andrew Presland as Wellingborough. Andrew lives at Rushden, about five miles away, and took the photograph on the back cover for comparison with the subject of the original watercolour. The broach spire and tower with paired belfry windows is a good match for Wellingborough, though Varley's sketch suggests some (possibly fanciful) statuary in niches alongside the windows. Somewhat foreshortened, the gable on the right appears now to be the east end of the south aisle of the church not a porch or south transept as was originally supposed. Northamptonshire is a county renowned for its church spires, though even a county with less good building stone like Cornwall still has more than a dozen medieval spires today.

In front of Wellingborough's ornate church and to the south-east is a building in the market square which must be the church house. Joyce and Maurice Palmer in their *History of Wellingborough* (1972) thought that the church house site was near to the present vicarage to the east of the church, but Varley's picture suggests otherwise. The 1524 will of William Clendon notes that Wellingborough's church house was being built in that year as he left twelve pennies to the building costs. Fashionable and expensive close studded timber-work and jettying on two or three sides is clear evidence of a high status building and can be seen in the Varley sketch. Public or semi-public buildings were usually substantial structures and allowed to encroach on market places, as here, or on churchyards or village greens in return for a nominal ground rent. Indeed in 1530, when the south aisle of the church was being built, a separate church yard almshouse in Wellingborough was envisaged by another testator John Raynold. He left 26 shillings and 8 pennies to make partitions in the alms house but only 'if it may be mayd in the churcheyard'. This may be the church house site referred to by the Palmers. Possible traces of an upstairs door giving access to the Wellingborough church house's first-floor feasting hall are detectable beside the first of the two chimneys in the Varley sketch. Originally there would have been an external stair of stone or wood leading up to this doorway.

Two further wills refer specifically to Wellingborough church house before the Reformation, but neither mentions a location. Thus in 1537 Margaret Bythery left a table cloth to our Lady's guild and to other guilds for the aid of the same to be used and occupied in the 'chyrche howse', while a similar bequest was made in 1545 to Cookham church house in Berkshire. At Rickmansworth in Hertfordshire, gifts to the church house included a towel in 1473 and in 1494 a little brass pot repaired and mended in the bottom. More unusually, in 1541 Richard Westmore, a London ironmonger who probably had Wellingborough roots, left five shillings among the parishioners to make them merry in that church house. No specific reference to Wellingborough church house was made in 1549 when the guild lands were sold, but because it was called a church house rather than a guild house it may have survived in church use or become a school later.

Interestingly, at both Wellingborough and Rickmansworth local guilds used the church house in rotation for their feasts and drawing up their annual accounts. This was possible because apart from fund-raising church ales in Whitsun week and possibly three or four other times a year, autumnal funeral wakes, and marriage feasts, church houses could be empty for large parts of the year. Where church houses were leased out to tenants, provision could easily be made in the contract for occasional use by parishioners and guild members. Other towns, like Chagford in Devon, funded both a church house and a

guildhouse, but only because the tinners' guild of St Katharine at Chagford was a very large and wealthy guild.

When Varley visited Wellingborough around the turn of the nineteenth century the church house roof had several holes in it and the glazing was rather adrift. It is just possible that the building survived as part of Butcher's Row, an area demolished in 1874 when Wellingborough market-place began to be opened up again, but it may have been demolished, or fallen down, rather earlier than this.

See Andrew Presland's photograph of the church on the back cover

References:

For Wellingborough see *Archaeological Journal* lxx (1913), pp. 41, 215 (Wellingborough wills) and *Victoria County History of Northamptonshire* volume 4 (1937), pp.135-46, Joyce and Maurice Palmer, History of Wellingborough (1972).

Pre-Reformation Wills from Rickmansworth 1409 to 1539, ed. Heather Falvey (Rickmansworth Historical Society, 2021).

J. Mattingly, 'Built to last? The rise and fall of the church house', *The Local Historian*, vol 42, no. 2, May 2012, pp. 107-118.

While out climbing ... 15

On a warm Sunday morning in early September I climbed the steps of York's Clifford's Tower, the recently restored central point of the ancient city. From the top of the Tower is an all-encompassing view. Immediately below is the Eye of York, a courtyard enclosed by York Castle Museum and York Crown Court, the traditional site for official proclamations. It was here as I looked down from the ramparts that King Charles III was proclaimed to the people North Yorkshire. The gathered crowd were hushed until the call came for three cheers, which carried up with piercing clarity and out into the city.

Joe Saunders



Radio programmes and local history

Readers might like to think about searching out another radio programme which captured local history by interviewing local people, namely **Down Your Way.**

One of our members had made a cassette recording of the programme's visit to Langport, which was broadcast on 22 July 1979. We transcribed the recording and transferred it from cassette to CD. We then contacted the BBC to find out what use we could make of both the recording and the transcript.

The tape included an interview with Sidney Warner, the last manager of the Langport glove factory, which I wanted to include in a book I was writing about the gloving industry in Langport*. We already had the permission of Mr Warner's daughter, and the BBC had no objection to that particular extract being included in the book, with the appropriate credits. They also confirmed that, although we are not allowed to play the tape in public, we can play it to our members. They were thrilled to hear it, as the personalities were still within their living memory.

Janet Seaton
Chair, Langport & District History Society

* *Hand in glove: Langport's gloving history*. Pict's Hill Publishing, 2017

https://langportheritage.org.uk/

The challenges of researching Charles II's escape from Worcester

Trevor Fisher

The escape of Charles II into exile in 1651 is one of the most famous episodes in English history, though most people probably know little more than the fact that the King spent a day in a tree. 'The Royal Oak' is the third most popular name for an English pub. While there is an enormous literature on the escape, there are absences at the heart of the historical record. During the King's nine years in exile, little was said about how he had escaped, those who knew feared reprisals from the Protectorate. Upon the Restoration in 1660 the floodgates burst with the publication of pamphlets, broadsides, and ephemera about the incident, which the King made no attempt to respond to. He did, however, approve of the first (1660) edition of Thomas Blount's *Boscobel*, which recounts the first week of the escape. A first edition of which is currently displayed inside Boscobel House by English Heritage. This volume is the generally accepted account of what happened in that first week. Partly because Blount was a Catholic from Worcestershire, and it is assumed he had interviewed the participants, save the King, and as a co-religionist would have had an advantage over other writers.

When Blount published a second edition in 1662 the King was displeased, thereafter, the King was critical or noncommittal till 1680 when he gave two interviews with Samuel Pepys giving his account of events. If Charles aimed to bolster the Stuart dynasty with a heroic tale, he failed; his account was not published till the Stuart dynasty had fallen. Instead, he left a confused historical record.

Opportunities to remove confusion were missed with *Boscobel* and more importantly, the failure of the King's attempt at an authorised version through Pepys. Pepys was a meticulous, rigorous, and skeptical man, who was not in awe of the King. He realised there were mistakes and omissions in what he had heard, and though this is the only full account given by the King, the central and sole continuous witness to what had happened, his account was at best partial. Twenty-nine years after the event the Royal memory had faded and though he must have told the iconic tale innumerable times, the King had no written notes, had not witnessed all the crucial developments, and had allowed confusing printed accounts to be circulated. Pepys sought other eyewitnesses accounts to supplement and corroborate what the King had said, but what he gathered he never produced for public consumption, except leaving his notes to Magdalene College, University of Cambridge where he possibly imagined they would be read.

Eighty-six years after the dictating session to Pepys a text was published based on the notes. Edited by David Dalrymple in 1766, this edition has been reprinted many times. In 1966 William Matthews stated that 'all the editions I have examined follow Dalrymple's text, without check from the manuscript at Magdalene College'.[1] Dalrymple did not include the other accounts Pepys had collected to augment the account of the King.

The problems of the King's record are illustrated by the puzzles arising from the best-known episode in his life, the day spent in the oak at Boscobel. The King's account is the prime, but not the sole source of evidence for this mysterious event. In 1966 Richard Ollard published *The Escape of Charles II,* which has a detailed account of the Saturday at Boscobel, quoting verbatim a morsel of what Charles told Pepys in 1680, but using a variety of sources without addressing his process.[2] His account has a resemblance to later equally full descriptions, such as that given by Charles Spencer in his 2017 *To Catch a King* and the 2019 account by Martyn R. Beardsley, *Charles II and his escape into exile*. All such accounts feature the role played by the Penderel family and Major William Careless and have details which cannot have come from the King's account for virtually nothing was said to Pepys about what happened on that iconic day. The source for the detailed descriptions of what happened at Boscobel cannot therefore come from the King's testimony to Pepys, so must come from other eyewitness accounts.

The challenge is to find out where these other sources are and examine them. The three most recent accounts of the Escape do not explicitly discuss their use of eyewitness accounts, but Ollard notes that a full transcript of the material supplementary to the King's narrative is to be found in the British Library AD MS 31955. However, anyone who visits will find only a clerk's fair copy, which raises the question of where the originals might be. The British

Library has directed me to the Bodleian in Oxford. The Bodleian Special Collections Enquiries in turn have turned me to MS Rawl. A 194, fol 253 which is given in the index to the *Rawlinson Quarto Catalogue* as 'Carolus II. relates to Pepys the history of his escape after the battle of Worcester'. However, when I asked for information on what is specifically in the folio their response is that their records show only a reference to 'an account of the preservation of King Charles II after the battle of Worcester' and refers to papers in Magdalene College, Cambridge. This directs attention to the Pepys Library at Cambridge, which is the logical place to find Pepys documents.

The Pepys Library houses MS 2141 which is described as an 'autograph draft, in shorthand, headed 'A journal of ye king's escape from Worcester, taken by mee from ye king's own mouth' on 22 quarto leaves (plus two blanks) together with a longhand transcript made by a clerk on 79 folio leaves. Both are dated October 1680, bound with other relevant documents collected by Pepys, and partly in his hand, including "Notes from Father Hurlston."' Communication with the Library shows that file MS 2141 contains 15 documents relating to the escape collected by Pepys. If these are a complete set of reliable documents, then this is a place to start detailed work.

As I am a local historian with an interest in national developments, Charles Stuart's escape from the Battle of Worcester was a logical follow up to my 2019 project, *Mary Queen of Scots in Staffordshire*. However, researching Charles' time in Staffordshire and Shropshire presented unexpected obstacles. The issues highlight Pepys' reluctance to publish. In his 1966 summary Matthews contended that 'his absorption in public affairs, the sheer abundance of his scholarly interests, and his nagging perfectionism' all provided reasons for Pepys leaving the task undone.[3] I suspect instead there was a deeper reason. The sheer difficulty of relying on the King's recollections is enough to explain why Pepys did not feel confident about the material he collected. As Pepys could not produce a satisfactory resolution, the King's account represents a challenge to historians which has never, yet, been resolved.

This is an edited version of an extended note on the problems of researching the King's time in the Forest of Brewood, to be published on the website trevorfisherhistorian.com.

NOTES
1. William Matthews, *Charles II's escape from Worcester* (1966) p34
2. Richard Ollard, *The Escape of Charles II* (2nd ed 2002) pp 37-41
3. Matthews, p10

Testing a new digital application for military records

BALH members are invited to take part in user research with the Ministry of Defence's team working on a new online project to help users 'Apply for a Deceased Persons Military Record'.

The team is working to improve the experience of those who use this service on GOV.UK and it would help if users could now test the work to ensure it meets their needs; this includes assisted digital/assisted technology and accessibility users. Participation is voluntary and your feedback will help improve GOV.UK.

For more information or to share your interest please contact

DBSCIO-ADPMRFeedback@mod.gov.uk

or call 0300 154 3339 within the working hours of Monday - Friday 11am to 4pm



Here is a photograph of Richard Prescott, grandfather of BALH Outreach Coordinator Stephen Miller. He used the old system to apply for his WW2 record. See above for how you can contribute to improve the new online service for this.

Celebrating the bicentenary of the birth of Hampshire's often overlooked author in 2023: Charlotte Mary Yonge (1823-1901)

In terms of its literary history Hampshire is particularly associated with Jane Austen. As a result, other authors can often be overlooked. In her time one of the most influential and prolific of these was Charlotte Mary Yonge (CMY), who lived her whole life in the village of Otterbourne, situated between Winchester and Southampton. In celebration of the bicentenary of her birth the CMY Fellowship and Local History Section of the Hampshire Field Club & Archaeological Society (HFC) have joined forces to promote this important event. There are four main strands to what is being planned.

The first is the production, with financial support from the Hampshire Archives Trust, of a commemorative booklet. This will seek to raise the profile of CMY as a significant female writer of the 19th Century; provide the basis for engaging with some of the locations in Otterbourne and the neighbouring village of Hursley particularly associated with CMY; offer some insights into Otterbourne and Hursley as CMY would have known them; and encourage further study by accessing archival material relating to CMY at the Hampshire Record Office and elsewhere, such Special Collections at the University of Southampton.

Second, over the next few months, by means of articles in the *Hampshire Archives Trust* and *Hampshire Field Club Newsletters* and local publications, such as *Otterbourne Life*; and social media posts, including blogs, a podcast and items in the Field Club e-news, it is intended to increase awareness of CMY and the bicentenary of her birth and what is being planned to celebrate this event.

Third, on Saturday 24 June 2023 (provisionally designated 'CMY Day in Otterbourne and Hursley'), CMY Fellowship and HFC members and others will visit Otterbourne in the morning and Hursley in the afternoon. At Otterbourne, we hope to have entertainment based on music familiar to CMY and provided by 'Madding Crowd', a group which researches and performs, in period costume, church and secular music of English villages and choirs from the period 1660 to 1861, followed by talks and a self-guided tour. After lunch, there will be similar activities at Hursley. The previously mentioned booklet will assist in guiding members and others on 'Charlotte Mary Yonge Trails' through Otterbourne and Hursley, with information about places in both villages linked to CMY.



photograph of CMY from a private collection

Last, it is intended to organise a number of displays/exhibitions, one of which will be at the Hampshire Record Office in the spring of 2023.

Any readers of *Local History News* will be very welcome to join us on 24th June with further details being provided in a future issue.

Should anyone reading this have any information about CMY, Otterbourne or Hursley in the nineteenth century, which they would be happy to share, please do get in touch.

Roger Ottewill, Hampshire Field Club (rogerottewill@btinternet.com) 15 Atherley Ct, Southampton S)15 7NG
and Alys Blakeway (CMY Fellowship) Alys_Blakeway@yahoo.co.uk

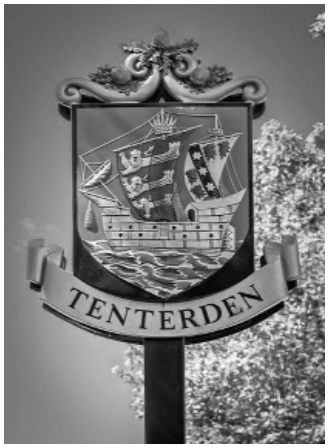
https://charlottemyonge.org.uk

Tenterden, Kent: making a Family Fun Trail

Jane Mills

Tenterden is a picturesque Kentish town with a tourism soubriquet: 'The Jewel of the Weald'. The town has in the past produced a variety of excellent heritage maps; however in 2021 several threads converged towards the creation of a 'Family Fun Trail': to be freely available to all, inclusive, online, downloadable, and as paper leaflet. These initial threads included our community art festival; a personal lockdown project; dedicated aid towards the town's post-covid recovery; and the town council's appointing a supportive Town Centre co-ordinator. The author's connection as both the secretary of the history society and a volunteer teacher in local schools meant practical development material was very much to hand!

We have famous visitor attractions in the neighbourhood, but our focus was on the immediate vernacular nature of the high street and our unique heritage as a Cinque Port (Limb of Rye). Success in preparation included finding a local graphic designer with experience of similar tourist projects, who quickly understood the style of child-friendly illustrations we required; negotiating a budget; and placing bids to the T&DLHS and to the Town Council Donations committee to obtain funds. All production costs including the printing of several thousand excellent quality leaflets totalled less than £2,000.



What really helped in development was the settling on a nautical theme, inspired by our distinctive town coat-of-arms (*left*), including the Cinque Ports heraldic banner. This inspired delightful pirate characters from the illustrator, evoked a pirate vocabulary to use and brought the instructional points of the Trail to life. The most challenging aspect was the selection of content and distributing these amongst the five 'activity levels' on offer. We have a huge collection of buildings from all eras and a wonderful set of local characters with stories to tell. Most differences amongst the team were about inclusion - we always wanting more detail, the designer strongly recommending less.



part of the trail leaflet

The finished product is just fantastic. The main tourist points of the town are linked - the railway, the museum, the entertaining high street. When distributing our piles of the initial leaflets, we saw that local business owners and workers immediately recognised its attraction and usefulness. It'll be a long-term asset to the town. For children, enjoying the 'Horrible Histories' approach and seeing their enthusiasm on the Trail was hugely satisfying - for the author, the very best part.

Jane Mills is Honorary Secretary, Tenterden and District Local History Society

With thanks to Tenterden Town Council

https://www.tenterdenhistory.co.uk/familyfuntrail

Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society - grant funding available

The Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society is fortunate in currently having three separate grant streams open to individuals and organisations active in the heritage of the county.

The Betton Fund was originally established with a view to supporting the publication of publication of Parish Registers in Shropshire and the adjoining counties. The terms of the fund have now been amended to support the publication and accessibility of local history resources in Shropshire which would be of direct, or indirect, use to family history.

The Pagett Fund was set up by the Society using the bequest made by John Pagett. The Trustees have established this fund to make grants to individuals or organisations who are pursing activities which meet at least one of the aims of the Society itself.
These overall aims are:
1. The advancement of the education of the public in archaeological and historical investigation in Shropshire.
2. The preservation of antiquities in the county of Shropshire.

The Rees Fund was set up following a bequest from the estate of medieval historian Dr. Una Rees in 2021. The society agreed to set up this fund specifically to support medieval studies in Shropshire in memory of Dr. Rees.

The society welcomes applications to all the funds and there are no specific deadlines for applications. A wide range of research and activity supporting Shropshire's history and archaeology has been supported in recent years including :

£2,000 towards the excavations at Nesscliffe hill fort to be carried out by the project led by Prof. Gary Lock of the University of Oxford and Dr. Paul Reilly of the University of Southampton.

£5,000 to Shropshire Museums Service towards the acquisition of the North Shropshire Hoards. These bronze age items are of huge significance to the history of Shropshire (*see right*).

£182 to Shropshire Archives towards the purchase of 2 minute books, Church Stretton Rural Sanitary Authority minutes, 1872-1879 and Church Stretton Rural District Council minutes, 1897-1907. These volumes filled significant gaps in the service's holdings.

£10,000 to Victoria County History (Shropshire) for research and publication of the medieval charters of Newport (Shropshire). This will make a significant contribution towards ongoing research into this important Shropshire market town.

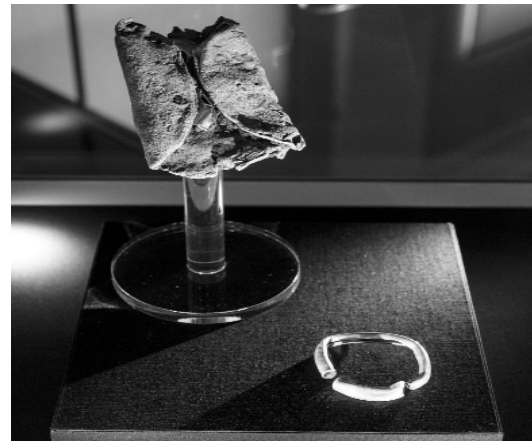
Details of how to apply to all the funds can be found on the Society's website

www.shropshirearchaeologyhistory.org

or please do contact me to discuss any potential applications.

Mary McKenzie, Treasurer, Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society

tel 01694 723804,
email maryfmckenzie@googlemail.com



lock rings (photo Shropshire Museums Service)

Local History after 40 years

Stuart A. Raymond

In 1982, consulting sources could be very tedious. Since then, the digital camera has replaced the photocopier, digitised images have replaced microfilm readers, and the internet now provides immediate access to, for example, all the probate records of the parish of Avebury, which I am now researching. What a contrast to my experience ordering photocopies of wills from Cornwall Record Office in the late 1970s! Living in Leeds, I could not easily get to Truro, and could only order ten wills by post at a time, at great expense. Obtaining all the wills I needed for my thesis on Week St Mary probably took me two years.

These reflections are occasioned by *Local History News* (Summer 2022), which draws attention to an advertisement for the BBC's 1982 programme, **History on your Doorstep**. I wondered what an advertisement for a similar programme in 2022 might look like. There have of course been many changes since then, not least the internet: digitised original sources have dramatically increased research possibilities. The sources themselves are not only much better indexed than they were, but also more extensive; many documents from the 19th and early 20th centuries which were previously not available can now readily be consulted. For example, we now have four decades more of the census, and Lloyd George's Valuation Office survey has become available.

Most of the books in the 1982 bibliography are still useful, but I think the list would now be headed by Kate Tiller's *English Local History: an introduction*. (Boydell Press, 2020). My original copy of W B Stephens' *Sources for English History* (Manchester UP, 1973) taught me a huge amount, but is now very much the worse for wear, and badly outdated; it inspired me to write *Researching Local History: Your Guide to the Sources* (Pen & Sword, 2022). I hope it will be a worthy successor to Stephens. *The Oxford Companion to Family and Local History*, edited by David Hey, (2nd ed., OUP, 2008) provides a more up to date encyclopaedic survey of our field. And David Dymond's *Researching and Writing History: a Guide for Local Historians* (4th ed. Carnegie Publishing, 2016) provides invaluable guidance on putting it all together for publication.

There are now also many guides to specific topics, for example, my own *The Wills of our Ancestors (*Pen & Sword, 2012), N W Alcock's *Documenting the History of Houses* (British Records Association, 2003), and John S. Moore's *Counting People: a DIY Manual for Local and Family Historians* (Oxbow Books, 2012). Apart from Dymond's work, the only title from the 1982 list that has not as yet been at least partially replaced by something more up to date is of course our own journal, *The Local Historian.*

Ed's PS TLH Archive is on the BALH website at

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

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continued from page 30

The importance of these volunteers to the town, and the pride felt in their commitment can be sensed in the detailed reports of their activities shared in local newspapers, an invaluable source for this subject. Later in the 19th century large scale reviews were regular opportunities for manoeuvres, exercises and 'sham fights' in front of vast crowds, combined with elaborate entertainments, competitive shooting matches and more.

Of course the focus of this study is on the military history. Footnotes give a little more information about individual officers, and a short section towards the end does identify some of the officers and men of the Portsmouth Artillery Volunteers, using the 1881 census. Amongst the officers were a bank manager, stays manufacturer, farmer, dentist, accountant, solicitor, commercial traveller in tea, and a newspaper proprietor. A sample was taken for the Other Ranks, the majority being tradesmen and artisans, with surprisingly few dockyard workers. A separate publication exploring the people further would be of interest, placing the volunteers in their community.

There are generous illustrations with maps, contemporary paintings, drawings and photographs, including modern photographs of the uniformed re-enactment section of the Society, clear references and bibliography, but an index would be useful. *JH*

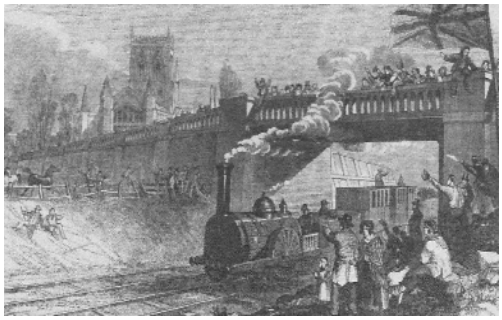
SOCIETIES



Mystery journal: while I entirely understand that society newsletters and journals are produced for the benefit of their members, many contain information that is of value to a wider readership, as demonstrated by the 'news' shared in *LHN* over the years (and another half dozen examples in this issue). The intended readers know who the society is, but it is helpful if contact details, website address and even (in an example I have beside me) the name of the organisation could be included. Thank you.

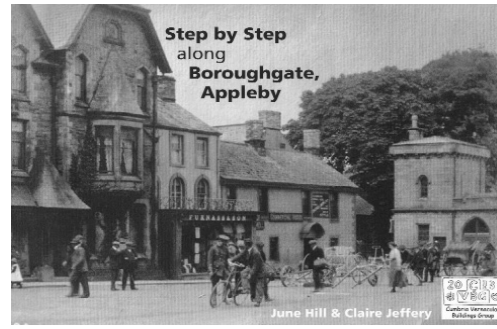
Suffolk Local History Council will be holding the AGM on Saturday 19 November. This will be followed by 'The history of Suffolk hedgerows' by Dr Margaret Thomas. *www.slhc.org.uk 'Tyndale', the Green, Ubbeston, Halesworth IP19 0HB 01986 798885*

Also on 19 November the **Society for Lincolnshire History & Archaeology,** Industrial Archaeology team, will be holding a full-day conference on Lincolnshire Railways at the Guildhall Arts Centre, Grantham. *www.slha.org.uk, SLHA Jew's Court, Steep Hill, Lincoln LN2 1LS 01522 521337*



Apologies to the **London Topographical Society** for the error in the last issue of LHN (p 21). The closing date for their essay prize is 1 April **2023**. *https://londontopsoc.org/about-us/ann-saunders-essay-prize/*

Cumbria Vernacular Buildings Group has recently published the tenth in a series of 'Step by Step' guides. *Step by Step along Boroughgate Appleby*, by June Hill and Claire Jeffery is a self-guided tour along what is 'arguably one of the most beautiful streets in an English town'. After finding the street in the context of the town, the reader is given a very detailed description of the buildings as they meet them, the whole illustrated with beautiful photographs. This is a worthwhile publication, produced A5, landscape for ease of use on your walk. *www.cvbg.co.uk. Available from M. Turner, 4, Connor Avenue, Carron, Falkirk, FK2 7FS, Tel 07947 518175, cost £3.00 plus £1 postage.*

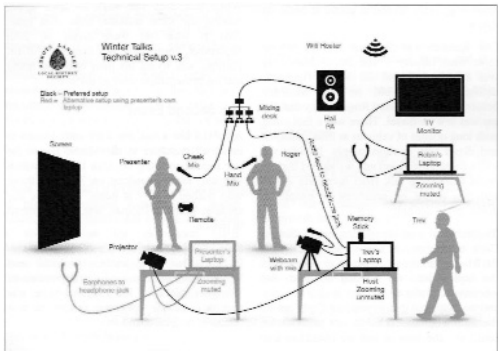


Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society is introducing a new membership category for families. This is cover 1 or 2 adults and up to 3 children aged between 6 and 17, and will cost £55 with an introductory offer of £45 to cover membership to the end of 2023. They plan a number of special family activities during the year. Is this a way of attracting more young people to local history and related interests? *www.sanhs.org*

Stamford & District Local History Society holds meetings and has an excellent new website. This is an interesting example of how societies evolve. Founded in 2003, they are the successor to Stamford Survey Group which began in the 1960s as a research group aimed at studying and publicising Stamford's past. The Group published a number of important volumes on the town, and many articles that were collected in The Stamford Historian between 1977 and 1982. There is an extensive collection of resources available for consultation. *www.stamfordlocalhistorysociety.org.uk*

Readers will recall Paul Carter's article in the last issue of *LHN* 'Insights into running a hybrid event'. **Abbots Langley Local History Society** has been running 'blended meetings' when it became possible to meet in person again. In their *Journal* of Summer 2022, Trevor Baker describes in detail how they went about this, with first a test event for a specially invit-

ed audience. Having ironed out the glitches, they now have a well-established system that has been shared with others. The article provides this diagram. *www.alhs.org.uk*



On page 32 you can read about BALH's work experience student, Marek Masojada. It is good to know that other groups are providing opportunities too. **Hornsey Historical Society** had 3 young people from local schools at the Old Schoolhouse for a day in the Easter holidays. From Year 9, Year 11 and Year 12, they were given specific tasks using the society's resources and the internet, selecting images, exploring the local newspaper and searching the society's archive catalogue for relevant material. The results were all put to good use, including contributing to the Volunteering section of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, and providing material for the website. *www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk*

In **Baslow History Group**'s *Newsletter* of October 2022 there is an article about the work of local road surveyors. John Clayton and James Wilson were appointed Surveyors of the Highways for the township of Pisley, parish of North Wingfield on 1 October 1832. The official document drawn up for their appointment sets out the formidable list of duties they faced. It begins 'You are at such times and seasons as you judge proper to view all the common highways, trunks, tunnels, plats, hedges, ditches, banks, causeways, bridges, and pavements, within your district, and give notice either personally or in writing, of all nuisances, encroachments, and obstructions …' followed by many more pages. *https://baslow-history-group.weebly.com/*

As part of an article on Elijah Newman (described on his memorial as 'the old and original ventriloquist'!) from **Egham-by-Runnymede Historical Society** we learn about the application of licensing laws in the later 19th century. Elijah applied for a licence to sell beer, wine and spirits off the premises at his house. Three objections were made: that the notice on the house was not the same as the published advertisement; the notice was placed not on the door (as required by Act of Parliament) but on the side of the door; and that the signature on the notice said Elijah Newma not Newman. After much discussion, the licence was eventually granted. *Editor, 10 Wavendene Ave, Thorpe Lea, Egham TW20 8LD 01784 432992 https://ebrhistsoc.wordpress.com/*

Do you know what a 'pightle of land' is? In **Epsom & Ewell 'Lives & Times**' *'The Residential Copyholds of Epsom. From the Records of the Manor of Ebbisham 1663-1925'* is perused for old words for pieces of land. Pightle is a corruption of pigtail - used to describe odd-shaped leftover bits when fields became increasingly rectangular for using mechanisation. *https://eehe.org.uk Ewell Library, Bourne Hall, Spring Street Ewell KT17 1UF*

In 1906 *The Dorking Advertiser* was concerned about the 'state of cottages' in Leigh. One of the contributors was a sanitary inspector who had spent some time cycling through the rural parts of Reigate and Dorking looking at housing. **The Newdigate Local History Society** *Magazine* reports some of his findings and follows up some of the inhabitants using other sources. For example: 'I went over a cottage occupied by a man, his wife, and six children, a wretched place. In the living room cracks all down back door, letting in wet and cold, but if papered up room smokes everyone out. Land rises at back, and in rain water flows under back door across the room and out of front door … Illness always in this house and baby died in spring of pneumonia'. From the burials register, that baby was identified as Herbert Leadbetter aged 13 months. *www.nlhs.org.uk*

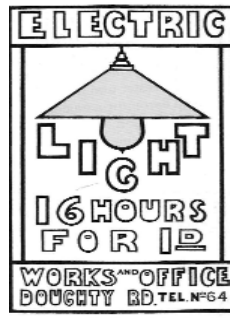
Thanks to **Rickmansworth Historical Society** for some light relief and very welcome 'slow news'. The following items (summarised) from the *Watford Observer* of Saturday 1 July 1882 appear in *Rickmansworth Historical Review* June 2022. The Height of Impudence: a boy opened the gate of a garden, cut a number of pinks and knocked at the door to ask the residents if they wanted to buy any flowers. Giant Peas: Thomas Hutchings, originator of the giant pea 'Challenge of the World' has grown a large quantity this season. Numerous persons have paid a visit to his nurseries for the purpose of viewing the crop. Cricketing News: A match was announced on the Rickmansworth Cricket Club ground between eleven of that club and eleven of Bushey Cricket Club, but as the latter eleven did not show up the match was not played. Severe Thunderstorm: The rain fell heavily on that side of Batchworth causeway where the London and North Western Railway station is situate, but not on the opposite side of the road where in the adjacent meadows a number of haymakers were busy at work in their shirtsleeves as if in the driest and brightest of weather. *https://rickmansworthhistory.org.uk*

ARCHIVES



The Researcher is the newsletter of the **West Sussex Archives Society.** Amongst the recent acquisitions at West Sussex Record Office was a collection of nine medieval deeds, unusual survivals and in surprisingly good condition. They relate to property in Hertfordshire, Somerset, Hampshire, Essex, Berkshire and South Yorkshire as well as West Sussex, and will be distributed to the appropriate offices when they have been scanned. *www.wsas.co.uk*

The magazine of **Friends of the National Archives,** *Magna,* is always full of varied and fascinating delights. Vol 33 No1 has advertisements for bird seed and electric light, an explosion in 1931 at the RN Cordite Factory in Dorset, the engine and dynamo room at Arundel castle - home generated electricity in the 1890s, a beautiful map of Aldbourne Chase 1607, and much more. *www.ftna.org.uk The National Archives, Kew, Surrey TW9 4DU*



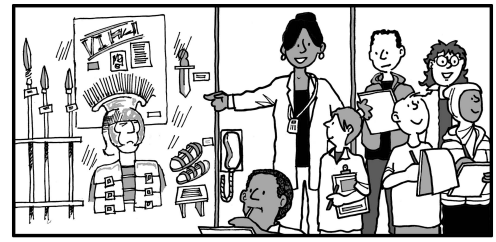
In the foyer at **Medway Archives Centre** last summer was an eye-catching display for the Medway Print Festival. Archives collections contain much print material which often do not appear in the public arena. The display ranged from their earliest printed book, from 1599, through to examples of 20th century artwork (*a section shown below*).



www.foma-lsc.org/index.html

Medway Archives Centre 32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester ME2 3EP

MUSEUMS



Chiltern Open Air Museum, which no doubt many readers have visited and hugely enjoyed, exists to save and reconstruct historic buildings that are under threat due to development. Now the museum itself is under threat. The popular programme of events, filming and other activities generate a large proportion of their income. Now the company that owns the freehold to their site has decided such activities are in breach of the leasehold contract. We will report further developments *https://coam.org.uk/events/halloween-spectacular/ Newland park, Gorelands Lane, Chalfont St Giles HP8 4AB 01494 871117*

Portland Museum is housed in two 17th century thatched cottages (*one shown below, before it was the museum*). It was founded by Dr Marie Stopes in 1930. Both her pioneering work in breaking taboos around women's health, and also her support for the eugenics movement are acknowledged - "she remains a complicated and controversial historical figure". The eclectic collections in the museum cover life on the island and surrounding waters, plus the quarries that supply the eponymous building stone. A small display features the Portland Volunteer Artillery Corps (*cf* those at Portsmouth, see page 30), established in 1860. They were ordered to disband in 1889 due to gross insubordination! The cause was a shooting competition, clearly won by the Portland men but awarded to their rival neighbours Weymouth. In protest all three Portland companies boycotted an official inspection. They were eventually vindicated and reformed 9 months later. *https://portlandmuseum.co.uk 217 Wakeham, Easton, Portland Dorset DT5 1HS*



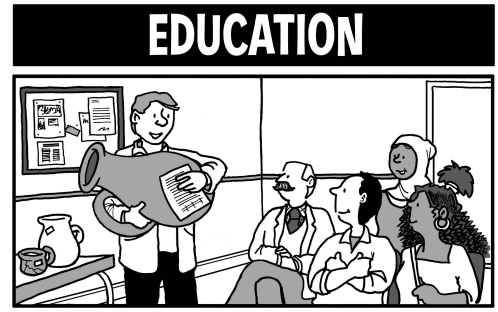
A public lecture will be held at **West Kirby Museum** on 3 November, marking the Centenary of the official opening of the Grange Hill War Memorial in 1922. On 12 November they are holding an exhibition day 'West Kirby Remembers WW1 and WW2'. *www.westkirbymuseum.co.uk St Bridget's Centre. St Bridget's Lane, West Kirby CH48 3JT*

Sittingbourne Heritage Museum quarterly journal for September contains an interesting article on emigrants from Sittingbourne between 1904 and 1914. Some 2,000 people left the small town in that time, and the museum's study group decided to trace them. Names and addresses for some were found in the local newspaper from advertisements for auctions that were held selling their possessions to pay for the journey. These names were followed up in the 1901 and 1911 censuses. Canadian census returns were used to trace their new lives. The people, their reasons for going, the relation to local economic conditions, and many other issues are discussed. This would be a valuable example for comparative studies elsewhere. *www.sittingbourne-museum.co.uk*



Nominations for the **McCulla Award 2022** for an outstanding local studies librarian are welcome from library users as well as staff. The closing date is 30 November. The award is usually given for a recent major project or as a lifetime award for someone near the end of their career. See *LHN* 143 for the 2020 and 2021 winners. *Please send the nomination to Alice Lock, Secretary, Local Studies Group at CILIP, alicelocalstudies@outlook.com* under the following headings: your name, your email, name of nominee, post held and name of library, professional career, activities and projects involving the nominee, publications and web pages etc written by the nominee, statement of support indicating why the nominee is worthy of the award.

A £95m redevelopment project began this summer at the **British Library** site at Boston Spa. The -ever-growing collection at the BL requires about 8 km of new shelving annually. They are running out of space. The new project will considerably increase capacity in a sustainable way. Further details on the special characteristics of the building, its surroundings, and related cultural and learning programme in Leeds, can be found at *https://www.bl.uk/projects/boston-spa-plans*



B**irmingham History Day 2022** will be held on Saturday 26 November. It will be exploring local and community historical and heritage activities which are being pursued in Birmingham, including a big project on the English Civil War. **The Centre for West Midlands History** is continuing its programme of research seminars by zoom. On 17 November the subject is 'Coventry's Godly Magistrate: Robert Beake (1620?-1708), soldier, mayor and MP'. And on 19 January it is 'The landscape of English medieval towns: some West Midlands examples'.
Friends of the CWMH
https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/cwmh/friends/friends-of-centre.aspx

University of Wolverhampton's Centre for the History of Retailing and Distribution invites submissions for its 2023 on-line seminars on Retailing and Distribution History, from any period and any geographical area, from experienced and new speakers, with or without an institutional affiliation. The deadline is 25 November 2022. *Further details here: https://retailhistory.wordpress.com/2022/09/16/call-for-papers-2023-chord-online-seminars/*

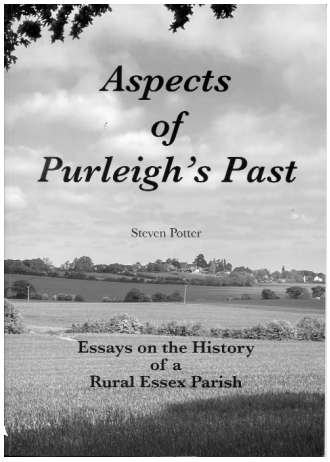


books ...

Aspects of Purleigh's Past: essays on the history of a rural Essex parish

Steven Potter

privately published 2022 140pp ISBN: 978-1-3999-2621-8 £15 + £3 p&p
Contact stevenpotter@btinternet.com



These essays are the result of the considerable amount of research carried out by the author over many years. It is parochial in the best possible sense of the word, and looks at twenty one specific topics relating to this parish, using a wide range of archive sources, and greatly benefitting from the fortunate survival of a good number of manor court records, as well as useful eye-witness accounts.

The essays vary considerably in length - less than a page on the forgotten and virtually undocumented rural potash industry, ten pages on the location, extent and fate of the parish's woodlands from the early Middle Ages to the present, and twenty pages on the care of the poor up to 1836.

Though confined to a single parish, it is likely that these essays will be helpful to other parish historians, as each essay is comprehensively referenced. That on the operation of the poor law in particular could be useful for comparative studies with other parishes, as well as providing an overview of the relevant national legislations.

The text is well illustrated with images and maps, though the clarity of some of these could be better. It is thoughtfully and clearly written, one example amongst many being the author's exploration of the possible link of John Levett, the seventeenth century 'elusive beekeeper', to Purleigh. This is a model of persuasive but carefully moderated speculation. It is pleasing too that the Essex Place-name Project database has been so productively used in several of the essays. The author can also be commended for publishing the results of his long-term research which might otherwise have been lost and wasted. As this reviewer has discovered, even archive resources can no longer be taken for granted in the face of stringent local authority spending cuts, and getting good research work into print is more important than ever.

It could be argued that this work will only be of interest to those with connections to Purleigh, but it would be unjust to limit its potential usefulness in such a way. This publication is an exemplar of how to embark on local research, how to make best use of the available sources, and how to explore one's curiosity when the usual sources are frustratingly scanty or non-existent.

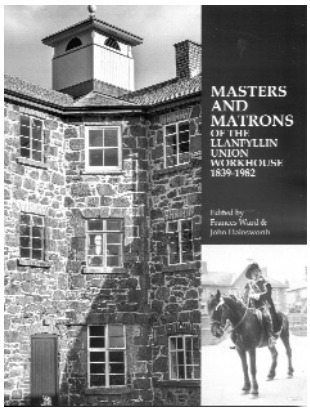
Michael Leach has been closely involved in researching and writing about Essex local history since taking early retirement in 1997.

Masters and Matrons of the Llanfyllin Union Workhouse 1839-1982

edited by Francis Ward & John Hainsworth

Llanfyllin Dolydd Building Preservation Trust 2021 134pp ISBN: 978-1-80068-037-1
£9.50 + £2 p&p from francis.ward1514@btinternet.com

For many years the life and times of the workhouse has been a popular topic for local historians. Unsurprisingly, particular interest has been taken in those unfortunate enough to be housed in them. As the contributors to this attractively produced and accessible study of the workhouse in the Montgomeryshire village of Llanfyllin point out 'as yet there have been few studies of the background and performance of workhouse officers' (p 23). Their aim, in what is a commendably collaborative venture, is to provide insights into the character of the masters and matrons and, to a limit-



ed extent, other staff of Llanfyllin Union Workhouse (renamed Y Dolydd, The Meadows, in 1930), from its opening in 1840 to its closure in 1982; the challenges they faced; and how these changed over the years.

It is clear that the roles of master and matron were particularly demanding. Indeed, as what today would be called a 'person specification' for them indicates, they needed a varied mix of interpersonal and administrative skills and the ability to speak Welsh, the language spoken by many of the inmates, to be able to undertake them effectively. Not only were they required to perform a large number of social care type tasks, including the maintenance of discipline and order, but also to keep accurate records, especially with respect to the finances of the workhouse.

The publication also covers a much longer time span than many workhouse histories, with the buildings surviving to the present day. As explained, since the closure of what had become residential accommodation for mainly the elderly, they have had an afterlife and since 2004 have been gradually restored by the Llanfyllin Dolydd Building Preservation Trust (for further details see http://www.the-workhouse.org.uk/history-centre-the-workhouse/).

After an introductory chapter entitled 'Putting you in the picture', which provides some basic information about the changing legislative framework governing the workhouse and successor institutions and associated terminology, there follow micro-histories of those appointed to the posts of master and matron. Each of these chapters have titles, such as 'Uncharted waters', 'The perfect master?', 'An indulgent father', 'Keeping it in the family', 'Larger than life' and 'The professionals', which seek to capture the essence of their tenure. It would seem that with the first two, and indeed some later appointments, there was an element of nepotism at work, with the Guardians favouring those with whom they had close connections. One consequence of this was that problems often arose over their competence. In the main, however, the appointments proved to be sound choices. As the authors conclude, 'the principal factor in determining the welfare of the disadvantages or vulnerable people will always be the character of those who care for them' (p 131).

Overall this publication is an engaging and, in places a moving, read. It is a fitting tribute to the researchers and to those women and men who strove to ensure that the workhouse, and later Y Dolydd, was a 'safe haven' for those who, for whatever reason, had to reside there. It can be thoroughly recommended.

Since retirement, Roger Ottewill *has pursued his interest in local religious, political and administrative history, with particular reference to the 19th and 20th centuries*

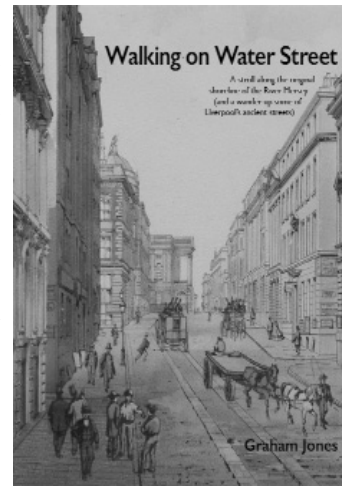
Walking on Water Street: A stroll along the original shoreline of the River Mersey

Graham Jones

published by the author 2021 448pp ISBN 978-1-915292-48-3), £49.95 + p&p
£39.95 to BALH members post free from walking.on.water.street@googlemail.com

This must be one of the most beautiful and lavishly illustrated books I have ever encountered. There are over 1,500 illustrations: old maps, prints, photographs, art works, plans, advertisements, directories, press reports, and recent photographs taken by the author. It is also packed with information, meticulously researched and fully referenced.

It will appeal particularly to those who live in or grew up in Liverpool or, since it deals with the area bordering the Mersey, those of us, like myself, who grew up on Wirral and remember the Pier Head landing stage. The current waterfront, of course, with its 'Three Graces', Albert Dock and Tate Gallery was, until it was delisted recently, a world-heritage site but this is not a book about the making of that distinctive urban scape. As the subtitle makes clear, this is an in-depth study of the 'original shoreline' which was situated further inland.



This was a very different Liverpool, very little of which remains. It is not a chronological history; far from it. The 34 chapters can be read in any order. In these Graham Jones lovingly documents elements of this older Liverpool, its buildings, residents, businesses and the street life of the area much of which has since been swept away by later developments. It is perhaps best viewed as an historical walking tour through a lost landscape.

All human life is here. Chapter 21, for example, 'From Simpson's Café to the Cabin and the Kiosk' includes the story of café owner William Simpson and his fountain and charity bowl outside St Nicholas's church; Annie Garvey who lived to be over 100 (allegedly) and squatted in a hut by the Dock Estate; Agnes Cowper who left a record of her return from the United States; Mary Bamber, suffragette who stood as Labour candidate in local elections around the time of the First World War; and the proprietors of the 'Cabin', a small tobacco shop and newsagents below the Liverpool Overhead Railway station at the Pier Head. Chapter 22 explores the warehouses and offices of the Goree Piazzas, named after an infamous French slaving depot on the west coast of Africa. First mooted in 1769, eventually constructed 1793, it burnt down 1802, was subsequently rebuilt and only demolished 1948. Numerous illustrations accompany the text which traces its various uses and occupants over that period. Chapter 26 explores George's Dock and its Gates, with its Pier Head Baths (1829), Merchant's Coffee House, business warehouses, landing stage, the 'floating roadway' which replaced the dock, the 'Line of Docks' horse drawn railway omnibus which ran every four minutes from 5.00am in the morning, and the clearing of the site for the erection of the Royal Liver Building.

Whether or not one knows Liverpool, one can enjoy the sheer ambition and beauty of this book. It really is uncovering and peopling a 'lost history'. No doubt similar studies could be produced of parts of other cities, but it is doubtful if anyone could do it as well as Graham Jones.

Mike Winstanley is a member of the BALH publications committee and historian of North West England who grew up on Merseyside.

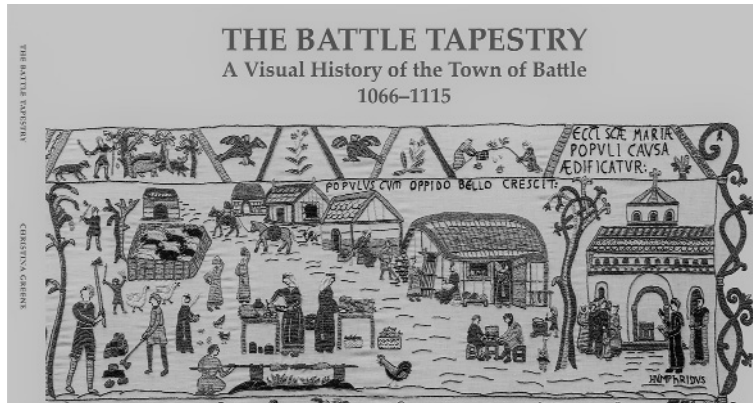
The Battle Tapestry - a visual history of the town of Battle, 1066-1115

Christina Greene

Greenebat Books 2019 x+54pp ISBN: 978-1-9162750-0-3 £15 + p&p from tina@greene.org.uk

The Battle Tapestry, unveiled in May 2017, portrays the history of Battle in Sussex from October 1066 to the foundation of the village church in 1115. It comprises eight scenes, most including women as they were important in creating the new settlement in the Wealden forest. Chapter 1 explains the sources used for the historical events depicted in the scenes in the Battle Tapestry and Chapter 2 explains the design, which is based on the Bayeux Tapestry, now some 67 metres long and 50 cm wide. Its ends are much damaged and the final part is missing. Two modern designers, in France and Alderney, have produced a 3 metre long 'finale' showing events up to the end of 1066, including William's coronation on 25 December 1066 at Westminster Abbey. In contrast, the Battle Tapestry, also 3 metres long, provides a snapshot of events from 1066 to 1115.

Chapter 3 provides the historical background to each scene in the tapestry and then describes them. Most were suggested by local historians, who, it is clear, know the local and national history of the period. As in the Bayeux Tapestry, Latin descriptions have been given to each scene and the title of each scene given here is the translation of its Latin title. In Scene 1 'Gytha and Edith find the body of Harold'; in Scene 2, 'William is recrowned in Winchester' and 'Ermenfrid imposes a Penitential Order' (penances imposed on the Normans to atone for the people killed between 1066 and 1070); in Scene 3, 'William orders the monks to build the Abbey on the hill where King Harold was killed'. Next come 'Battle Abbey' and 'Master craftsmen construct the Abbey'. As William died before the Abbey



was completed, it was consecrated by Anselm the archbishop in the presence of William Rufus. Scene 7, 'The population grows with the village of Battle', has vignettes from every day life, including carrying water, spinning flax and a year's cycle of crop growing; in Scene 8 'The church of St Mary the Virgin is built for the people'. The lower borders comprise small images reflecting events in the main scene above.

Regarding practicalities, the same seven colours of thread were used as in the Bayeux Tapestry, and particular colours were used in the same way: for example, yellow for gold crowns, sceptres and gold braid on clothing, stone and metal are usually blue. Much attention was paid to costume and there are even patterns for a kirtle (underdress) and an overdress.

Although designed and organised by Tina Greene, the Battle Tapestry was a community project. Chapter 4, 'Stitching and stitchers', describes the various contributions. There were 741 registered stitchers (some stitching more than others); local organisations gave space in which sew or donations to pay for materials; local businesses made practical gifts, such as the display case in which the tapestry is displayed permanently in Battle church. This beautifully illustrated book reveals a community project with a marvellous and lasting outcome.

Heather Falvey

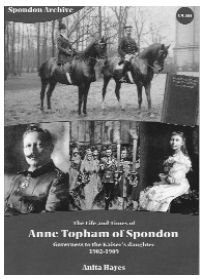
The Life and Times of Anne Topham of Spondon

Governess to the Kaiser's daughter 1902 - 1909

Anita Hayes

Spondon Archive 2022 ISBN 978 0930949 7 2
£5 + p&p available from Spondon Historical Society, c/o Anita Hayes, 31 Church Hill, Spondon, Derby, DE21 7LJ (please supply a telephone number to confirm postage costs)
www.spondonhistory.org.uk/#publications

This book is clearly a labour of love. Anne Topham comes alive in its pages as readers discover what life was like in the German court during those increasingly tense years before the First World War.



Anne's own writing, in a surprisingly lively style, about her experiences as governess to Princess Victoria Louise, and her fiction, is illuminating of her own opinions and provide information about the social and economic context in which she lived.

Lack of concrete evidence about parts of Anne's life, before and after the time in Europe, has required the author to speculate, on perfectly reasonable grounds and clearly justified, to fill the gaps.

Less satisfactory is the number of digressions which feel rather too much like unnecessary padding. Some copyediting would help to avoid inconsistent tenses, repetition, and curious placement of footnote numbers. An index of subjects should be added to those of names and places. Much content of interest is aimed at Anne's 'life and times' that would be accessible thereby - clothes, houses, education, entertainment, leisure activities and much more.

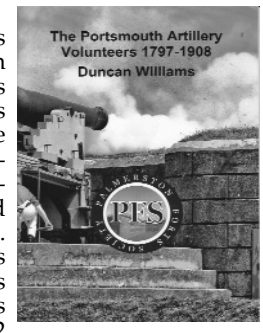
Anne Topham is certainly someone who deserves to be better known, locally and beyond.

JH

The Portsmouth Artillery Volunteers 1797-1908

Duncan Williams

Palmerston Forts Society 2021 £8.65
www.palmerstonfortssocietgy.org.uk
Fort Nelson, Portsdown Hill Road, Fareham, Hants PO17 6AN



The Palmerston Forts Society was formed in 1984 and brings together enthusiasts who have an active interest in 19th century military fortifications and associated artillery worldwide. Coastal defences required people as well as buildings. Acts of Parliament in 1782 and 1794 controlled the raising of corps of volunteers, initially infantry and cavalry. Hampshire was one of the first counties in the country to raise a company of Artillery Volunteers, at Gosport in1786 and Portsmouth in 1797, indicating the importance of their location to defend the major naval dockyard.
This book makes a very detailed examination of the Portsmouth company, set against the national historical background when volunteers were raised or stood down according to the risk of invasion and the state of maritime defences to meet it.

continued on page 22

Change of address

BALH can now be contacted as follows:
BALH Office c/o Moore Insight,
St James House, Vicar Lane,
Sheffield S1 2EX

telephone 01625 664524,
email admin@balhorg.uk

Jennifer Hirsh

We were sorry to hear of the recent death of Jennifer Hirsh who was given a BALH Award for Outstanding Individual Contribution to local history in 2021. She will be a great loss to both the Abington History Group and the community in Little and Great Abington villages, for whom she did so much. See *LHN* 140 Summer 2021 page 7.

Joan Thirsk 1922 - 2013

2022 is the centenary of the birth of Joan Thirsk. She was a Vice-President of BALH for many years and we recorded her 90th birthday (*LHN* 104, Summer 2012) and her death just over a year later (*LHN* 109, Autumn 2013), as well as mentioning many of the conferences, books and other activities with which she was involved.

As a personal tribute, I would like to recommend readers to the entry she wrote in David Hey's *The Oxford Companion to Local and Family History* (1996), under the heading 'women local and family historians'.
It begins

'It is not usual to distinguish the work of women historians from those of men, though it is always instructive to do so. Their different lives make for different viewpoints and yield different insights; hence, in practice, they frequently choose distinctive themes for investigation, have their own styles in research and presentation, and rank their objectives and priorities differently.'

I find the whole essay illuminating, stimulating and enjoyable. You may not agree with her, but it is well worthwhile thinking about.

JH

Outreach Team news

BALH's outreach efforts, carried out by the Outreach Team, Outreach Coordinator and the Digital Team, have been considerable during 2022 with plans for a range of activities throughout the winter of 2022-3.

In October our **Local History Hour** was on nineteenth century working class writing and a study of William Small of Salisbury and in November is on nineteenth and twentieth century parish politics.

Our second winter academic '**David Dymond Lecture**' brings you research on the history of water and flood management in Kingston upon Hull [*see Supplement page 2*].

2023 promises further fascinating talks and other activities as we work together with a range of partners, the Society of Genealogists, Society for One-Place Studies, AGRA, and the Historic Towns Trust [*see Supplement page 3*]. We are already planning further Local History Hours, Local History Day and the 2023 Dymond Lecture.

The BALH blog continues to draw in excellent research as does our popular series of online '**Ten-Minute Talks**'. We are always looking for new blogs and videos so please get in touch if you would like to share your local history research with a wide audience.

In October our Chair of the Outreach Team, **Susan Moore,** stepped down from her role. It is in large part through Susan's efforts that BALH has recently achieved so much, especially with her steady guidance and impassioned drive during the pandemic years. Through her, many ideas have become reality and our outreach efforts are a buzz of activity.

The BALH Outreach Team, which promotes the Association and local history generally, is looking to expand to keep up with our growing range of activities. Team members organise our events (such as online talks and conferences), represent BALH and local history in various guises, engage in educational initiatives and produce or source much of our online content (our blog posts and Ten-Minute Talks). We also tie the association into the wider historical world, especially local historians and societies across the regions of Britain. **We are seeking passionate local historians** who are enthusiastic about BALH and want to volunteer to contribute to the work of the

team. All levels of experience and skillsets will be considered. If you are interested to hear more please get in touch with our new Outreach Team chair, Joe Saunders [joseph6.saunders@hotmail.com].

BALH Work Experience Placement

Marek Masojada

As a student on a History and Film Production course at Canterbury Christchurch University for my second year History module, Applied Humanities: Employability In Practice, I was set the task of applying for a work experience placement with a heritage organization of my choice. A core part of this was having to write a well-structured cover letter, and CV, as well as prepare for an interview at the very end. This is how I discovered the British Association for Local History (BALH). While this was very daunting to begin with, little did I know that what I would go on to do would go far beyond my expectations. The reason I say this is because I can now see myself having a career involved with the heritage sector and in doing so contribute to the preservation and teaching of humanity subjects like history and many more, whereas previously I was not that convinced.

This was due to a range of factors. For instance, following a successful and productive interview, with Paul Dryburgh, and Paul Carter, along with social media fellow, Megan Kelleher, and engagement fellow Catherine Warr, I was set a series of placement tasks to complete. Each of them combined both my interest in history, and creative passion in filmmaking.

The main task of my BALH work experience was to write and produce a ten-minute documentary covering a historical topic relating to Canterbury. This was challenging, due to how vast and deep Canterbury's history is. But the aim of my documentary was clear - select a topic that can be considered as a micro part of Canterbury's local history and portray it in a way that is thoughtful and engaging to viewers. One of BALH's objectives, as a heritage organization, is to encourage the exploration of less well-known areas of local history. It is for this reason, that I decided to focus my documentary on Canterbury's Roman past, titling it 'Elements Of Roman Canterbury In Plain Sight'.

What followed over the next few weeks, from researching, to filming, to editing was a revelation. By simply taking the time to look closer into the history of particular landscapes and old buildings such as the Roman burial mound in Dane John's Park and to the design of the city wall, I discovered that the common features around everyday Canterbury can have their origins traced back to the time of Roman Britain. This had a significant impact on my levels of engagement and overall enjoyment of the placement.

But what made it more memorable was working with such caring people as Megan, Catherine, and Paul since early March. Their passion and enthusiasm for history is incredibly contagious, and on full display at Local History Day in London, where I assisted as a videographer. I felt deeply privileged to be a part of it and cannot express enough how grateful I am to have been given this opportunity to be on placement with the BALH. The knowledge and confidence I have gained from it, as well as the friendships I have made, will help me a great deal going forward in my last year at Canterbury Christchurch and beyond.

To everyone, at BALH, thank you.

20sStreets and TNA

BALH is delighted to partner with **The National Archives** on **20sStreets** (*logo below*), a new engagement initiative to raise awareness of local history through the **1921 Census for England and Wales**. You can now get unlimited access to the census through a premium FindMyPast subscription. This is your chance to get involved. We are launching two competitions, for individuals and groups, to find the best local history stories in England and Wales. These are digital competitions with great prizes for the winners. Full details of how to enter can be found on The National Archives' website (https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20s-streets/) and our own BALH website.



From our Irish correspondent

Alan Crosby

Our esteemed Irish correspondent, James Scannell from Dublin, frequently sends me copies of journals and newsletters produced by local history societies in Greater Dublin and County Wicklow. It's always very interesting to read these, and to note their differing formats and ambitions. Some are a miscellany of shorter pieces, while others include lengthy articles. I always enjoy the detailed and comprehensive accounts of Wicklow town 100 years ago which are researched and written by the indefatigable John Finlay, chair of the Wicklow Historical Society/*Cumann Seanda Chill Mhantáin*, in its journal. He uses the reports in local newspapers, the minutes of the Urban District Council, and the records of the Wicklow Harbour Board, making sure that the wider significance of events and news-items is made clear. In recent years, not unexpectedly, a lot of attention has been given to the local 'small town' impact of the momentous sequence of events from the pre-1914 Home Rule campaign, via the Easter Rising and the War of Independence, to the troubled birth of an independent state.

James Scannell himself is a prolific author of local history articles, which appear in a wide range of publications. He has a keen eye for the quirky and curious aspects of the subject, as well as being a well-known historian of Irish railways and shipping, among other subjects. In the latest issue of the **Dun Laoghaire Journal** (no.31), the annual publication of the Dún Laoghaire Borough Historical Society, contains 25 short articles, two of them being by James. From 1821 until 1920 Dunleary (as it was spelled in the early 19th century) was known as Kingstown, in honour of a visit by George IV in 1821. James has been reading the minutes of the Kingstown Urban District Council and, with that ability to spot the unusual, he came across an oddity from March 1905.

Towards the end of a busy meeting, attended by ten councillors, the town clerk (M A Manning), his assistant, the accountant, the surveyor and the solicitor, Mr Manning raised a hugely important and surely highly controversial issue. In Kingstown, he said, people walked on the left-hand side of the road, and rarely on the right as in other towns. I can imagine the sharp intakes of breath, the vigorous nodding in agreement, perhaps even the firm shaking of heads in disagreement.

But that was not all, for according to Manning the worst offenders were - no, not youths, loungers or feckless ne'er do wells, as you might have expected - the worst offenders were actually policemen! If one walked from Kingstown to Dalkey, one would notice that the police walked, two by two, on the left-hand side of the road. Almost as bad were females, who walked three by three, and arm in arm. What's more, nurses with perambulators seemed to think that they had an exclusive right to the 'side-path' and, overall, the current - and presumably deplorable and shocking - state of affairs was 'due to the gross ignorance of pedestrians as to the proper side of the road to take'. The Council, he said, should hang KEEP TO THE RIGHT WHEN WALKING signs from the lampposts, which he hoped would ease congestion in the streets.



Councillor Potterton reminded him that the matter had already been discussed by the council's Roads Committee, which had prepared a report recommending that very policy for Upper and Lower George's Street. The report, which also recommended that the police should be made aware of the problem, had in fact been adopted by the Council earlier in the meeting. It looks as though the town clerk had not been following proceedings very carefully!

But although the councillors of Kingstown 117 years ago hoped that a solution to this terrible problem had been found, I somehow suspect that their plans were utterly futile. Last time I was in Dún Laoghaire - admittedly a good few years ago - I didn't notice any one-way discipline among the pedestrians, and the streets were thronged with randomly walking crowds. And I didn't see any gardai walking two by two, either … they were in their patrol cars.

Trustee profile

Tim Lomas made his first appearance in BALH as a member of the then Education Committee. Shrouded partly in the mists of time, Tim believes that was before 1990. In those days, the Association was under the watchful gaze of Michael Cowan but somehow he survived this scrutiny and has rarely been off either the Advisory Committees or Board of Trustees since. For many years he chaired the Education and later Outreach Committees. He also served a term as Deputy Chair and later a 6-year spell as Chair, the longest possible allowed by the Constitution.

Tim's interests have been widespread but his contact with schools, first as a teacher and examiner and later as an adviser, inspector, trainer and educational manager have always led to his advocacy of BALH including teaching and learning as a key part of its role. In recent times, it involved playing a leading role in the Teacher Fellowship scheme, a joint project with the Historical Association, to develop teacher expertise and resources

Whilst his initial specialism was medieval history including a doctorate in later medieval social and economic history, his interests have subsequently ranged widely including educational and transport history. His management interest also was used in helping produce key BALH management systems and strategies such as the current constitution and the outsourcing of various services to KSAM (*now Moore Insight*).

Whilst retired from full time work, Tim remains active in many aspects of history. He previously served on national advisory committees and acted as a consultant in a number of countries. Currently, he serves a a trustee and vice president of the Historical Association as well as the deputy chair and honorary secretary of the Devon History Society. His career has given him a taste of many areas of the country - Hampshire, the North East, Shropshire, Lincolnshire included but he has now returned much closer to his roots in Cornwall - well almost at least. He worked out that South Devon was as far west as he could go if he wanted to get to London for meetings and return the same day.



***'When we were very young'**: a management meeting at Cromford Mill, Derbyshire, in July 1994.*

From left: Norman Alvey, Christopher Charlton, Tim Lomas, Alan Crosby and Mike Cowan.

The Local Historian *Vol 37. 1 February 2007 p 4*

Notes News Issues

HM Queen Elizabeth II 1926 - 2022

It is with the sadness that the British Association for Local History acknowledges the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II following a lifetime of service to the people of Britain and the Commonwealth. She has been a point of stability in an era of momentous change in Britain and the world. We as local historians will record, analyse and convey the history of her reign in our own localities.

The events of September 2022 have been marked in innumerable ways across Britain, and we will be interested to read reports of local responses in society newsletters.

It is perhaps timely, with experiences of the pandemic, the change of monarch, and now recent economic pressures, to re-ask 'what is the local historian's role in recording the present?'

Local History Day 2023

Please be ready to join us digitally for this new format LHD in the Spring. Further details to follow.

BALH Awards for Local Historians

https://www.balh.org.uk/resources-balh-annual-awards

Outstanding Individual Contribution: nominations are welcome for 2023 awards. Please note the closing date is 31 December 2022. Nomination and reference forms are on the BALH website, and were published in *LHN* 144.
Further details of this and the awards for **Research & Publication**, and for a **Society Newsletter** may be found on the inside front cover of *LHN* as well as on the website. To avoid disappointment and save time, please read the criteria carefully.

BALH
Local History Photographer of the Year 2023

The beautiful and fascinating photographs from the successful inaugural competition in 2022 were published in the last issue of *LHN*, and on the website.

The 2023 competition will be launched very shortly on our website and social media.

Readers' comments

Thank you to everyone who has written since the last issue, it has been a fruitful postbag/inbox.

First some apologies - a hitch in communication here resulted in the front cover caption from issue 143 appearing in issue 144. Because a query came about the specific aircraft shown, the author kindly supplied the following extra information: 'The front cover image is from a publication given to staff at the Bristol Aeroplane Company. The company was keen to emphasise past achievements and ensure that staff knew the company background and make them take pride in the place they worked. It is roughly dated to the 1940s. The plane on the cover looks to be a Bristol Beaufighter. In the background is the Bristol Boxkite flying over Clifton Suspension Bridge, this is based on a real photo taken c1910'.

I hope the typo was obvious on p 21, the closing date for the **London Topographical Society** prize should be 1 April 2023.

Now the good news: many thanks to everyone who offered back issues, we now have complete archive set of *LHN*.

The response from Andrew Presland to Jo Mattingly's query has resulted in a follow-up article in this issue (page 15).

Two readers sent in their comments on radio programmes and doing local history decades ago (see pages 16 and 22).

Railway database

Has anyone explored the 'Railway Work, Life & Death' database (*LHN* 144 page 11)? We will have a longer article about the project in January.

Change of address for BALH
see page 31

BALH Officers and Committees

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

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Membership and Financial Services: Moore Insight

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

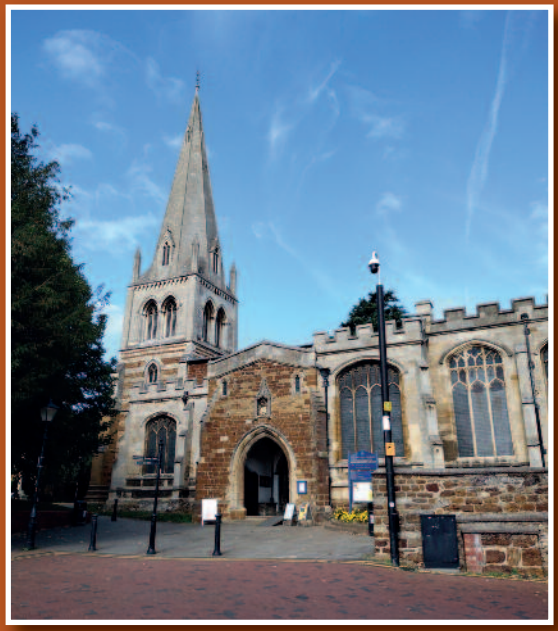
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Chadderton Historical Society and the Award for a Society Newsletter, see page 6





Marek Masojada, see page 32

Wellingborough church, see page 15

@BALHNews @BALHNews

Price £3.00 : free to members

Local History News

NUMBER 145 OCTOBER 2022 www.balh.org.uk

Supplement

BALH Dymond Lecture 2022

Thursday 8 December 7 pm via Zoom

LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND LEARNING HISTORIES

Briony McDonagh,
Professor of Environmental Humanities
at the University of Hull.

(further details overleaf)



Old Harbour, River Hull

'SAVE THE DATE'

LOCAL HISTORY DAY 2023

It *had* been decided to hold our new format digital LHD, on the theme of local history in the interwar period, on 6 May. Since the news of King Charles III's coronation, a new date will be found. *Further details to follow.*

BALH AGM 2023 and Local History Hour

Thursday 25 May 7 – 9 pm

The AGM of the Association will take place online in 2023 and will include the final Local History Hour lectures of the season. *Further details in January.*

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

THE BALH DYMOND LECTURE 2022

Thursday 8 December 2022 7 pm via ZOOM

In 2021 BALH were proud to launch a new annual winter lecture, which we hope will become a highlight of our annual calendar. The lecture has been named in honour of Dr David Dymond, who died in August 2021. David was 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.

The inaugural Dymond Lecture was presented in early December 2021 by Professor Andrew Hopper who spoke 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.

In 2022 we are delighted to be hosting another distinguished academic, Briony McDonagh, Professor of Environmental Humanities at the University of Hull.

Professor McDonagh's talk is entitled

LANDSCAPE, ENVIRONMENT AND LEARNING HISTORIES

'Thinking forward through the past offers us opportunities to change things for the better in the future. This paper explores histories of living with water and flood over the *longue durée*, examining how the inhabitants and Corporation of one flood-prone town (Kingston upon Hull, UK) managed water to survive and thrive in a risky yet resilient estuarine environment. I will examine local stories and histories of an east coast town in the medieval and early modern period, alongside a wider discussion of how local, landscape and environmental histories can help us learn for the future'.

We are looking forward to welcoming members and friends to this fascinating talk which will be of interest to all of us considering landscape and the environment in our local histories, as well as how local history can inform our present and future.

The Dymond Lecture will be held at 7pm on Thursday 8th December via Zoom. The event will be free for BALH members with a small charge for non-members (reduced for members of our member societies). Booking information is on the BALH 'Events' page: **https://www.balh.org.uk/balh-events**

BALH LINKS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

20sStreets: see page 32 of this issue for an exciting new project in partnership with **The National Archives**.

Between January and April there will be another four online lectures in our successful association with the **Historic Towns Trust**. The provisional programme so far includes Professor Matthew Davies on the 'Layers of London' project; John Moore on Scottish urban mapping, and Louise Miskell on mapping Swansea. All the lectures are free to BALH members. Further details to follow.

Following fruitful preliminary discussions BALH hopes to work more closely on engagement and research initiatives with **AGRA, the Association of Genealogists and Researchers in Archives.** Both organisations will look to promote the other's events and offer their members discounted access. BALH members will be notified of discounted rate access to AGRA's Lunchtime Talks programme. We are also looking to collaborate on workshops and conferences in areas of mutual interest to our members, and to offer reciprocal volunteering opportunities in running events. Keep up to date with *Local History News* and the BALH website and e-newsletter for further details.

The strong bonds between local and family history are promoted by a speaker exchange with the **Society of Genealogists**. In September BALH Trustee Joe Saunders ran one of the SoG's Lunchtime Chats on the topic 'Your Ancestors and Local History'. In January Else Churchill will give a BALH talk on 'The importance of place in family history'. *https://www.balh.org.uk/event-balh-importance-of-place-in-family-history-2023-01-11*

Don't forget the link course offered with
Pharos Tutors 'Getting started with local history'
(course 254) – see *LHN* 139 page 31.

BALH SUBSCRIPTIONS 2023

Thank you for your continued support for BALH during 2022.

The trustees are glad to tell you that **Subscription rates remain unchanged** for another year, for all categories of membership; we hope that you will agree that this represents extremely good value for money. Membership renewal forms will be issued in November, by email wherever possible or otherwise by post, and we would appreciate it if renewals could be made as early as possible to avoid the Christmas rush.

If you are a UK taxpayer, please also complete the **Gift Aid** declaration, so that BALH can claim an additional 25p for every £1, at no cost to yourself. In this way you can provide even more support to the Association's aims in promoting local history throughout the UK and beyond.

Membership renewals can be made in all the usual ways – **online** via the website, by **BACS** transfer, by **standing order**, by **post** or by **direct debit**. The latter makes things easier both for you and for us – once set up, your renewal will take place automatically each year unless you choose to cancel. Please look out for the renewal forms, which will include full details of how to renew your membership. And whichever method you choose, please remember to make sure your **membership number** is included. This can be found on your renewal form, and also on the address slip for your journal package.

If you have any questions about your membership or the renewal process, or need to inform us of any changes to your details, please email us at admin@balh.org.uk, or telephone 01625 664524.

THANK YOU for your continued membership of BALH.
Your support is greatly appreciated.

Membership of BALH would also make a fantastic Christmas gift!
To set this up, please e-mail us at admin@balh.org.uk.