



LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

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VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

I spent the week of The Great Heatwave of '22 teaching a course on the Oxford International Summer School (it was on the subject of 'Sex and Sin in the Seventeenth Century', which I'm sure raised the temperature even further!). On the way home I travelled via Worcester and Church Stretton in Shropshire to see a friend. The arable fields and grasslands in the rural counties of central England were brown and yellow, dried and parched. Almost as though it was already autumn, there were dead leaves blowing in the breeze, and trees were beginning to turn colour.

Then northwards, past Shrewsbury and Whitchurch, and through Cheshire, and by the time I arrived in Lancashire I had reached a green and pleasant land once more. There was a relatively cooler breeze, the landscape was not desiccated, mist seemed to hang around the summit of Winter Hill, and there were verdant pastures.

I was reminded of doing O level history and geography, many years ago. North west England was said to be wet, wet, wet, receiving the full force of the moisture-laden south-westerlies. That, of course, was apparently a major reason why we had a cotton industry – though even then, that didn't seem an entirely satisfactory explanation – and it was also responsible for all those reservoirs, supplying the

thirsty people of Manchester and Liverpool with their drinking water. And there was the old chestnut about Manchester and rain.

In his *English Journey* (1933) J.B. Priestley wrote that ‘Manchester weather is a popular joke. And I do not care what the local meteorological statistics are, that joke has a solid basis ... I have never visited Manchester in summer, but at every other season I have visited it the weather has been foul, combining in varying proportions rain and sleet and fog. The city always looks as if it had been built to withstand foul weather ... Perhaps it is [the] warehouses [which] make the weather in Manchester seem worse than it is, turning the showers that fall into the dark gulfs of street between them into apparent downpours, thickening and yellowing and blackening mere patches of descending mist into blankets of fog’. A bit of a cheek, perhaps, since he came from Bradford, which is not known for its Mediterranean climate.

And what’s more, we know full well that (entirely contrary to the popular view) Lancashire can often enjoy dry weather. Indeed, at the beginning of the 1830s this was becoming a significant problem for the county’s vitally important water-powered industries. A consortium of the millowners of Bury and Radcliffe developed and implemented proposals to build a reservoir on Grane Brook, above Helmshore, which could be used to top up water levels in the Irwell so that the operation of mills would not be affected when the river was low.

Local historians do not usually pay much attention to the weather and climate, unless there’s a spectacular event – a flood, a blizzard, a prolonged freeze. I believe we might be scrutinising the subject more carefully in future. Climate change, ‘exceptional’ events which are no longer exceptional, regular flooding, moorland fires during droughts, the impact of sea-level rise... Lancashire in the later 21st century?

DATE FOR THE DIARY: FEDERATION DAY SCHOOL ON 5 NOVEMBER

The Federation is organising a day school on Saturday 5 November entitled ‘**Finding a way: Lancashire roads through history**’. There is an excellent line-up of speakers starting with Dr Ian Saunders, who will talk about Roman roads in the county and, in particular, how recent LIDAR research has transformed our knowledge of these roads. This will be followed by a talk by our own Chair, Dr Alan Crosby, on 17th and early 18th century roads, using a mixture of quarter sessions and highway surveyors’ records. In the afternoon Dr Paul Hindle will be looking at the relationship between the early and later turnpikes, and the first detailed county maps such as those of Yates, Greenwood and Hennet and the early OS maps. The day will conclude with a talk by Dr Geoff Timmins on road improvements during the Industrial Revolution. The day school will be held at one of our more popular venues, the Preston Masonic Hall, which has plenty of local parking and easy access by bus or train. It’s sure to be a most interesting day, so do come along.

Please copy and send the booking form below





LLHF Day School Saturday, 5 November

At Preston Masonic Hall
Ashlar House, Saul Street, Preston, PR1 2QU



Finding a way: Lancashire roads through history

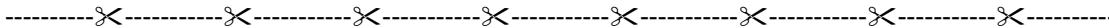
Programme

- 09.30 – 10.00 **Assemble & coffee**
- 10.00 – 11.00 **Dr Ian Saunders**
Roman roads in Lancashire
- 11.00 – 11.15 **Short break**
- 11.15 – 12.15 **Dr Alan Crosby**
17th and early 18th century roads via quarter sessions and highway surveyors' records
- 12.15 – 13.45 **Lunch**
- 13.45 – 14.45 **Dr Paul Hindle**
Turnpikes and county mapping in central Lancashire
- 14.45 – 15.00 **Short break**
- 15.00 – 16.00 **Prof. Geoff Timmins**
More than McAdam: road improvements in Lancashire during the Industrial Revolution

Fee £22 (to include lunch) £14.00 (day school only)

There is ample 'pay & display' car parking in the vicinity. Delegates may bring their own packed lunch

Applications must be received by 28 October



Booking form for Day School 2022

Please complete and return to: Zoë Lawson, 'Old Cuddy Cottage', Cuddy Hill, Woodplumpton, PR4 0BP

Telephone: 07471908077 email: elizoelaw@gmail.com

Please reserve me ___ place(s) I do/do not require a map of the location

I wish to book ___ places for lunch

Choose from: Hotpot ___ or Veggie lasagne ___

Name(s)

AddressPostcode.....

Telephone Email (please print).....

I enclose a cheque for _____ made out to LLHF

Or

I wish to pay by BACS. Please transfer funds to the following account:

Sort Code: 01-05-31 Account number 32603983. **Ensure you give your surname as reference.**

NEWS FROM ARCHIVES

LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES

NEW LANCASHIRE HISTORY PUBLICATION – *ARCHIVES*

Lancashire Archives hope to launch a new local history publication, *Archives*, to share new or untold stories of Lancashire's history. *Archives* will be published twice a year and sold widely throughout Lancashire at libraries, museums and archives.

We are looking for submissions that relate to the history of Lancashire, its people and places – from ancient history to the present. We hope to include a mixture of formal, researched studies and informal personal stories in the magazine, to offer as many people as possible an opportunity to see their story told.

Contributions could be anything relating to the history of Lancashire. Some ideas might include:

- The history of your town or village, your home or street, the history of local businesses, clubs, societies, groups or public organisations
- The story of a famous or notable person from Lancashire or who made an impact on the county
- The stories of individuals or communities marginalised from previous documented history, including women's history, BAME histories, LGBTQ+ histories or the history of people with a disability
- The histories of important events or occurrences in the county
- Reminiscence and personal stories about childhood, working lives or individual experiences; family history research and explorations of genealogical stories.

We're looking for articles up to 2000 words in length – but quite possibly much shorter than that.

If you would like more details on how to submit a story or to talk through an idea, please contact us at archives@lancashire.gov.uk

The deadline for submissions is **Friday 16 September 2022**.

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

The Annual Report for Lancashire Archives is now available, giving a summary of the past year within the service. You can read the report at <https://bit.ly/3oCj09o>

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES AT LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES

10:00–3:30 Saturday 10 September: Heritage Open Day - The Amazing Mr Mercer: An exhibition about John Mercer and his experiments with photography and printing. In addition to the exhibition, there will be creative workshops including cyanotype printing, tours behind the scenes and refreshments in 'Cafe Archive'

Heritage Open Days is England's largest festival of history and culture, involving thousands of local volunteers and organisations. Every year in September it brings

people together to celebrate their heritage, community and history. Stories are told, traditions explored, and histories brought to life. It's your chance to see hidden places and try out new experiences – and it's all FREE.

[Heritage Open Days - The Amazing Mr Mercer - Event Details - Lancashire County Council](#)

10:00-3:30 Saturday 17 September: Heritage Open Day - 1922 Guild Pageant

Revisited: In addition to a day of talks about the history of the 1922 Guild Pageant and pageants in Lancashire, you'll see the archives relating to 1922 at Lancashire Archives and the potential for use with schools. We are also hoping this event will end with a performance - details are to be confirmed so watch this space!

[Heritage Open Days - 1922 Guild Pageant Revisited - Event Details - Lancashire County Council](#)



After Diana Winterbotham stepped down from the Federation committee, she was presented with a gift in recognition of her loyal and hard-working contribution over many years.

THANK YOU!

To my surprise, a large package arrived at my door shortly after I had resigned from the committee of the Lancashire Local History Federation. It was a superb, framed copy of the Pilkington grant of free warren, a splendid document of 1291 relating to the area of Pilkington, my home township (not in St. Helens, but Prestwich in Bury). This was a gift from the Federation, and I thank all of you warmly. You could not have chosen a better gift for me.

I have very much enjoyed my long participation in Federation activities, going back to the first meeting in Ramsbottom called by Roy Carmyllie to propose the establishment of a county-wide supporting organisations for all the local history societies in the old county of Lancaster. I have made many friends through the Federation, and it is always a pleasure to meet old acquaintances with similar interests at our meetings. Thank you all for your friendship.

As the Pilkington grant will be unknown to many members, I have written a short description so that you will understand my affection for it. And thanks to all of you, I can look at an excellent copy every day.

THE PILKINGTON GRANT OF FREE WARREN

The grant was issued to Roger de Pilkington by King Edward I in 1291. This grant confirmed to Roger the right to hunt game on his manor of Pilkington, including animals such as rabbits, hares, partridges and pheasants, but not wild deer. It was not a grant to establish a deer park; Pilkington did have a medieval deer park but no grant for its establishment has been found and the earliest date of emparkment is not known. The manorial lands over which the grant gave Roger the right to hunt included Pilkington, Unsworth, Cheetham, Crompton, Sholver and Wolstenholme. Rivington, which was largely but not entirely owned by the Pilkington family at this date, was not included, descending subsequently outside the manor, although held by a Pilkington descendant; nor was Bury included: it was an important part of the manor later, but at this date not added to the family lands by marriage.

The existence of the grant of free warren has long been known, having been entered in the royal Charter Rolls [T.N.A., Charter Rolls 84 (19 Edw I) m10, no.41.] A year after the grant a *Quo Warranto* inquiry (which required grant holders to prove their rights) was held, and Roger produced his copy of the charter as his evidence, taking it to show at the court held at Lancaster [Calendar of Quo Warranto rolls, p. 369]

The copy of the grant held by the Pilkington family is an attractive document, written on parchment and measuring 191mm x 285mm (7.5" x 11.5"). The margins are filled with illustrations of birds and beasts most of which (an exception perhaps being the peacock crouching in the top border – and I have doubts about the crossbill) would have been known in the Pilkington woodland. This does not mean that they were drawn by a local artist, as the text of the charter would have been scribed in the royal chancery, where the coloured illustrations were probably copied from suitable images, although occasionally illustrations were left to be added by the local grantee. It is not certain where the Pilkington grant was illustrated. The birds shown include quail, merlin, woodlark, crossbill, woodcock, tree creeper, waxwing, jay and others, and the beasts show rabbit, hare, squirrel, wildcat, fox and deer of various kinds. A hooded falcon represents one of the hunter's trained birds of prey. The cow and sheep in the top corner are not out of place here; even parkland frequently had areas for grazing within its bounds, as was certainly the case with Pilkington Park at a later date. Standing in the bottom corner of the document is a crossbowman with two dogs. Attached at the foot of the grant by a cord is a large fragment of the Great Seal of England. [An illustration of the charter can be seen on-line at <https://bit.ly/3adwR2q>. The birds and beasts are identified in: Clay, Charles. An illuminated charter of free warren, dated 1291. *Antiquaries' Journal*, vol. 11, no.2, April 1931, p.129-32.]

Edward I was in the north of England at Norham near Berwick-upon-Tweed when he made the grant. Witnesses include the Archbishop of York, the Bishop of Durham, the Bishop of Bath and Wells, the Earl of Lincoln and several others. Eventually the grant came into the hands of Lt.-Col. P. L. Bradfer-Lawrence, and was then given by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam Museum to that museum in Cambridge, where it is still held. [Fitzwilliam Museum, MS 46-1980.]

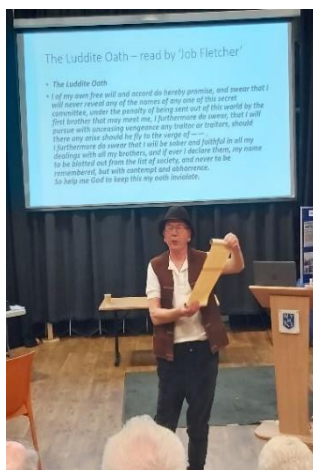
‘AT HOME’ AT WESTHOUGHTON 14 MAY 2022

Each year the Federation invites a member society to host a day where they have the opportunity to arrange speakers who can illustrate different aspects of their area. Westhoughton History Group gladly offered to host us at Westhoughton High School. The group organised a splendid day, carefully planned in every detail by a dedicated group from the committee.

The programme was introduced by the Chairman, David Kaye, who spoke proudly of the distinctive local dialect and, indeed, encapsulated several hundred years of Westhoughton’s history in that dialect in an amusing poem. Amongst triumph and tragedy, the town has much to be proud of.

The first session was led by Garth Ratcliffe and Anne Hodgson, who outlined **Some aspects of Westhoughton’s history over 800 years**. Brinsop Hall Farm was the local headquarters of Cockersand Abbey, from which they administered their tenant farms. A civil war battle took place in 1642, which is much less well known than some others. For hundreds of years the principal commerce was concerned with mining and textiles, each of which led to a catastrophic event. Anne’s focus was on the Hulton family of Hulton Park. The family held large estates in the area, including the ownership of mines. William Hulton (1787-1864) was High Sherriff, and it was he who ordered the yeomanry to launch an attack on protesters at the infamous event now known as Peterloo.

Pam Wood told the story of the **Burning of Westhoughton mill in 1812**. The background was the beginning of the industrial revolution; various inventions brought about the necessity of factories to house machinery, which made cloth much cheaper than what could be produced on handlooms by skilled men at home. In addition, in the early years of the 19th century there was a prolonged period of bad weather, poor crops and low wages. Richard Lockett built the mill in 1804, employing 100 people working power looms.



Working people slowly formed associations to press for better conditions, which the government resisted by Combination Acts. To counter the Luddite movement, magistrates imposed severe penalties for law-breaking, and government spies infiltrated secret meetings. The groundswell of discontent eventually led to 60 or 70 people breaking in, smashing machinery and setting fire to the mill. Eventually 4 men were hanged and seven were sentenced to transportation to Australia for 7 years. Subsequently Westhoughton continued to experience poverty and distress. Colin Gradwell took the part of Job Fletcher, one of the men involved, explaining their despair which led to the burning of the mill.

The development of the **Bolton to Leigh Railway** was outlined by Phil Wood. At one time there were 5 railway stations in Westhoughton. The Bolton and Leigh Railway has the distinction of being the first public railway in Lancashire, opening in

1828, two years before the Liverpool and Manchester railway. One of the investors was William Hulton who, with the rest of the committee, sought the advice of George Stephenson about the design. Phil outlined in depth the development of railways from 1760 onwards and, more specifically, the route, the design of the engine made by R. Stephenson & Co., the construction of the track, the land ownership and the grand opening by Mrs Maria Hulton. He described the intense involvement of John Hargreaves, whose carrier business expanded over much of the railway network in the north. The line operated independently until 1845 when it became part of the Grand Junction railway.

The 1910 Pretoria Pit disaster was the theme of Garth Ratcliffe's talk. 344 men and boys were killed as a result of the explosion at 7.50am on 21 December at Hulton Bank nos 3 & 4, popularly known as Pretoria Pit, as it was sunk at the time of the Boer War. It is the third worst mining disaster in Britain, and one of the worst in the world. 898 people were on shift. The reason that more than five hundred survived was that there were two shafts, and those who had gone down number 4 were safer. [Alan Davies has written the authoritative book *The Pretoria Pit disaster: a centenary account.*]

Some families suffered greatly – Miriam Tyldesley lost her husband, four sons and 2 brothers. Five boys aged 13 also died, as did Frederick Stanley Houghton on his first - and last - day at work. The last person to receive compensation died in 1973.

The Westthoughton group continues to commemorate the tragedy, which reverberates to this day, with booklets, displays and talks.

The renowned local folk group, The Houghton Weavers, composed a ballad about the tragedy. Jim Berry from the group sang the evocative song for the audience.



The Federation is delighted to announce that the 2023 'At Home' day will be hosted by Ribchester History Society. More details to follow.

SPEAKERS' CORNER

Our new feature, where speakers can publicise their talks. If you would like to do so, please email Marianne Howell, newsletter editor, mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk with the following details:

- Name
- Contact details
- Subject(s) covered
- Areas where you are willing to give talks
- Whether you would deliver over Zoom
- Any other relevant information

Please do not include details of fees, as this can be discussed with the organisation when you make contact. Any agreement will be made between the speaker and the

group, so the Lancashire Local History Federation cannot accept responsibility for any aspect of the arrangement.

JOHN E HARRISON

Email: cejharrison@btinternet.com
Phone: 07401100297
Location: Chorley (but able to travel)

Talks offered

Early Co-operation in Chorley
William Karfoot: A Lancashire Co-operator
The creation of Chorley Cemetery
Foundation and early years of Chorley Dispensary

John is a rambler and former local government officer. He is a member of Chorley Historical and Archaeological Society. He specialises in the history of 19th century Chorley and has published several articles. In 2020 he published a book *Co-operation in Chorley 1830-1880*, about an Owenite Co-operative community, a Co-operative mill and a Co-operative Retail Society.

MARTIN BAGGOLEY

Email: mbaggoley@hotmail.com
Phone: 01706 825912
Location: Ramsbottom
Zoom presentation preferred but prepared to consider travelling

Talks offered

Lancashire interest:

Murder & manslaughter in Victorian Manchester
Murder & manslaughter in Victorian Salford
Murder in Victorian East Lancashire
Women poisoners of nineteenth century Lancashire
Murder in the Victorian Lancashire family
Kirkdale; Liverpool's first hanging gaol
Strangeways; A century of hangings in Manchester 1869-1964
Thieves & Luddites; Executions at Lancaster Castle in the Bloody Code era

Contact Martin for fuller details of the nature and whereabouts of the crimes.

Of wider interest:

The baby farmers
Death on the Victorian beat
The stories of four eighteenth century women criminals

A retired probation officer, Martin has a master's degree in criminology. He is a member of the Crime Writers Association and has a special interest in the history of crime and punishment, especially in Lancashire during the Victorian era. He has

contributed many articles to professional journals and general interest magazines and has written eleven books on the subject.

NIGEL JEPSON

Email jepsonnigel@btinternet.com

Phone: 07713600282

Location: Willing to travel anywhere within Lancashire and Greater Manchester to give talks in person

Subjects covered:

History of Chartism in Lancashire

History of sport in Lancashire, featuring cricket and football.

In the last two years Nigel has devoted his time to writing three books on history topics of local Lancashire interest. Although his work has tended to focus on the Rossendale area, his books and research have at the same time broached a much broader county-wide platform. An experienced Lancashire secondary school headteacher, Nigel prides himself on not only bringing his topics to life but also very much on entertaining his audiences.

NEWS FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

7:00pm Thursday 8 September: Morris Garratt Memorial Lecture (via Zoom): The darkest of times? Life and death in the Manchester area in the mid-1790s, by Dr Alan Crosby. In Lancashire and north Cheshire the mid-1790s were long remembered as a time of darkness and despair. The war with France was raging, there were desperate shortages of food, price inflation was out of control, civil and social unrest was endemic, political agitation spilled over into violence, and the authorities resorted to draconian measures to try to control what they feared was an ungovernable populace. This talk focuses especially on the year 1795, looking at such events as the shootings in Rochdale marketplace that August, and uses contemporary sources to explore what life was like in the region during those troubled and frightening times.

2:00pm Sunday 11 September. Walk Round Park Bridge, Ashton-under-Lyne, with Mike Nevell. Meet at the Heritage Centre car park, OL6 8AQ. The walk takes in the former industrial hamlet, now a picturesque village in the Medlock Valley. It was once home to the busy ironworks of Hannah Lees & Co, served by a canal and railway. It is said that rivets made there were used in the building of the Eiffel Tower. The walk is part of the Heritage Open Days events in conjunction with Tameside Local History Forum.

Saturday 15 October: Castles conference at Chester's Grosvenor Museum. A full day's programme of speakers on castles in the North West is being arranged - details to follow.

2:00pm Wednesday 2 November (via Zoom): "She seems to have lost the power of looking after her husband and family and her home": Family poverty and the welfare state in Cheshire, 1945-74. Michael Lambert, from the University of Birmingham, will use this quote, taken from a social work report on a mother from Sale in the 1950s, as a route into exploring the topic of family poverty in Cheshire.

Contact secretary@landcas.org.uk for further details and to book a place.

These events are open to non-members, but membership of the Society is only £20 for individuals (£10 for students) and local societies are also welcome (at £25 p.a.) This entitles you to an annual volume of Transactions, full of peer-reviewed articles on a range of local history and archaeological subjects covering Lancashire and Cheshire. See the website for details of how to join - <http://www.landcas.org.uk/aboutsociety.html>.

MANCHESTER GROUP OF THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY

All the following events can be paid for on the day, but should be booked in advance by contacting Anne Hodgson anne.hodgson@hotmail.com.

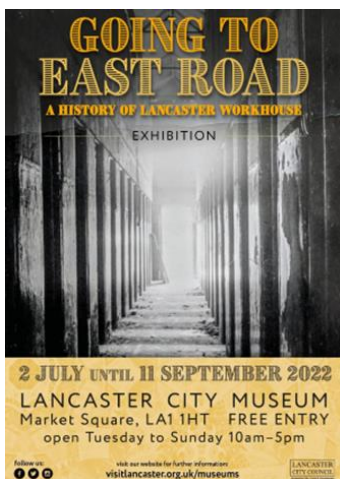
Walk: 6:00-8:00pm Tuesday 23 August: Peter Street to Piccadilly: architectural and commemorative walk – led by David Astbury. £7.00.

Visit: 3:00pm Saturday 24 September: Visit to E W Pugin's church – All Saints RC, Redclyffe Road, Barton-upon-Irwell.

Talk: 2:00 for 2:15pm Saturday 15 October: The great Miss Lydia Becker: suffragist, scientist and trailblazer. Talk by Joanna Williams, author of Lydia's biography of the same name. £7.00. Stretford Public Hall, Chester Road, M32 0LG.

Visit the website to sign up for the newsletter [Manchester | Victorian Society](#)

REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE



GOING TO EAST ROAD: A HISTORY OF LANCASTER WORKHOUSE

Exhibition at Lancaster City Museum

until 11 September

The exhibition tells the story of the much-feared institution, and includes documents and previously unseen photographs.

Oral histories are taken from the Elizabeth Roberts working class oral history archive, held at Lancaster University in the Regional Heritage Centre.

Saturday 15 October: Study Day at Lancaster Castle, marking the opening of the new Police Museum. Curator Sabine Skae will be among the speakers. She will outline the origins and development of the museum, and lead a private tour. The venue is Lancaster University's own learning space at the castle. Further details and booking will be available via the RHC online store [Events | Lancaster University](#).

Morecambe: the Eden of the North As part of the series of free public lectures provided by Lancaster University, an event was held in Morecambe Winter Gardens in which the principal speaker was Sir Tim Smit, founder of the Eden Project in Cornwall. In a short but wide-ranging talk he spoke about the interconnectedness of all life on earth, and exciting developments in technology and sustainability. He is spear-heading plans to build Eden Project North on Morecambe seafront, and spoke about its transformative potential.

The inspirational talk is available to view on YouTube at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uTuiMSd8P3A>.

Lancaster University Public Lectures: <https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/events/pu...>

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

7:30pm Wednesday 14 September: The Tudor bed: its authenticity – Adam Bowett

7:30pm Wednesday 12 October: Saddleworth's merchants and manufacturers: their architectural legacy – Mike Buckley. Meeting includes the AGM.

7:30pm Wednesday 9 November: A Gartsider sent to Van Diemen's Land: man's inhumanity to man – Sheila Goodyear

Meetings are held at Saddleworth Museum & Art Gallery, High Street, Uppermill, OL3 6HS. Members free; guests £3.

TAMESIDE LOCAL HISTORY FORUM

Heritage Open Days



A wide range of buildings will be open including a new venue - the brand-new Hindu temple on Lees Road in Ashton. Also included: Mossley Heritage Centre, Dukinfield Old Chapel (Unitarian), Fairfield Moravian Settlement, Mottram Parish Church, Newton Hall and Dukinfield Old Hall Chapel. A series of historical walks is also planned including Daisy Nook canal history walk, Currier Lane, Ashton and the industrial history of Park Bridge. Other events will be organised by Denton Local History Society.

Forum members are also contributing to Tameside Local Studies and Archives Heritage Month which takes place throughout September. They will talk about local inventors and inventions including the Attaboy hat and Daniel Adamson. Other events in this series include talks on Ashton workhouse (and the launch of a new book on the subject) and the Hyde engineer Benjamin Goodfellow.

Stalybridge is Greater Manchester's Town of Culture for 2022 and this will be marked by talks in September on the town's records, Robert Reschid Stanley (a Victorian mayor and secret Muslim) and Sam Laycock, the dialect poet, all at Stalybridge Library.

Details will appear in a leaflet (available from libraries), the HODs website <https://www.heritageopendays.org.uk>, the Tameside Local Studies and Archives website <https://bit.ly/3yEsFkH>, and a feature in the *Tameside Reporter*.

NEWS ROUNDUP

HORWICH HERITAGE CENTRE

Meetings are held on Tuesdays at 7:30pm at Horwich Community Centre, Beaumont Road, Horwich, BL6 7BG. Non-members £2 per meeting.

Talks

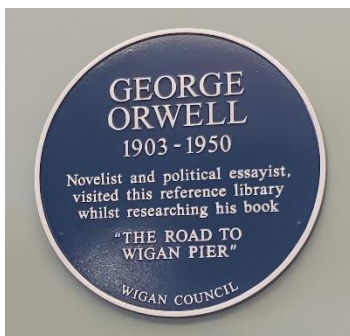
- 9 August: The Celts – Mark Olley
- 13 September: The last laugh of the Railway King – Geoff Scargill
- 11 October: The underground canals of Worsley – Alan Davies

Exhibition: July – September: Rivington Reservoirs 175.

The Heritage Centre is open Monday to Friday 2:00-4:00pm, Saturday 10:00-12:30. Free admission. For details of membership and other information including family history enquiries see www.horwichheritage.co.uk or Facebook [@horwichheritagecentre](https://www.facebook.com/horwichheritagecentre)

ORWELL AT THE MUSEUM OF WIGAN LIFE

An event was held in the spring to mark the 85th anniversary of the publication of *The road to Wigan Pier*



The venue was the very room where Orwell researched his work in 1936. The building was designed by Alfred Waterhouse, whose other work includes the Natural History Museum and Manchester Town Hall.

It opened in 1878 as Wigan's first public library, and the first public building in the town to have electric lighting.

The building now houses the Museum of Wigan Life and a local studies research room (the main archives for the borough are housed in the newly remodelled Leigh Town Hall).

For some time, the Orwell Society has been working with Wigan Borough and other interested parties to ensure that the links between Orwell, his seminal work, and one of the places where he carried out his research can be further researched and promoted. <https://bit.ly/3hEnlWm>.

The audience was welcomed to the event by Quentin Kopp, Chair of Trustees, and Richard Blair, the son of Eric (Orwell) and Eileen Blair, who is Patron of the society.

There was an interesting and informative programme for the afternoon.

Richard Blair briefly outlined Orwell's book. He was sent by the publisher Victor Gollancz to research deprivation in areas of the country. In the 1930s, northern industrial towns were suffering greatly from the after-effects of the war, and other causes of poverty and deprivation. Richard recognised that still today Wiganers have very ambivalent feelings about how their town was portrayed: a middle-class Old Etonian deliberately chose to stay in the most poverty-stricken lodgings he could find and was scathing about what he observed. However, he also saw that there was a real community spirit, and observed that people worked extremely hard, sometimes in terrible conditions.

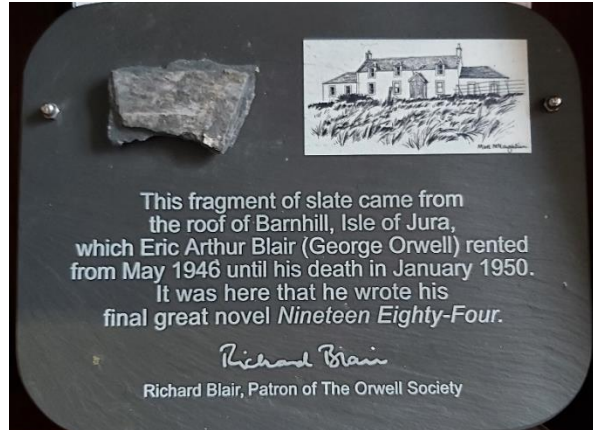
Other participants chose different aspects around the theme:

Cloe Heaton compared the deprivation of the 1930s with conditions in Wigan now and outlined some of the negative stereotypes people use when thinking of the town. But Wigan has a lot to be proud of: Wigan Warriors - one of the most successful rugby league teams of all time - Uncle Joe's Mint Balls – and pies!

Yvonne Eckersley's talk was 'Magistrates against miners, Wigan 1844'. The local landowner, the Earl of Crawford, owned many mines and was also a magistrate. He did not hesitate to issue fines and imprisonments to his own workers when they appeared in court in 1844. Gradually, more people began to question employers' power, which drove the growth of trade unions.

The writer and lecturer, Michael Howard, is writing a two-volume work about the prolific artist Theo Major (1908-1999). Wigan-born Major is considered by some to be an outstanding artist, although his work is not widely known [Theodore Major](#). He wanted to disturb people, as a way of arriving at truth and beauty. He was a teacher at Wigan art school at the same time as Orwell was carrying out research a few yards away in the library. Although he detested Orwell, the two men were both fervent anti-fascists.

Terry Burtonwood entertained the audience with dialect poetry inspired by Orwell and his book, followed by Alan Gregory who sang his song about an imagined encounter Orwell had in Paris.



There was a presentation to Lisa Nandy MP and to some Wigan staff, of engraved and illustrated plaques, made from the old roof slates of Barnhill, the house on Jura where Orwell stayed with his sister Avril and Richard to write Nineteen Eighty-Four.

The image shows Richard Blair (L) and Quentin Kopp holding paintings presented by the artist Terry Burtonwood.

Quentin Kopp's father, Georges Kopp, became Orwell's brigade commander when they fought on the republican side in the Spanish Civil War. The two comrades kept in touch, and for a time lived near one another in London.



THE WEAVERS UPRISING BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE

Dr David Scott

In this short article I first briefly give an overview of the 1826 weavers' uprising in East Lancashire, before proceeding to give an outline of the goals and objectives of the recently formed bicentennial committee and how it plans to work towards the 200th anniversary of the uprising in 2026.

The weavers' uprising in East Lancashire, 24-27 April 1826

The mid-1820s were a dark period in the history of a rapidly industrialising society. At that time handloom weavers and their dependents constituted about 60% of the population of east Lancashire. The first two decades of the 19th century were also a time of state neglect, state violence and terrible human tragedy.



Chatterton – view from the hill

This included the massacre, by soldiers of The 60th, Duke of York's Own Rifle Corps, of six people at Aitkens and Lords Mill, Chatterton, during the weavers' uprising on 26 April 1826. Many hundreds in east Lancashire also died in the two years that followed, because of starvation or related causes.



The handloom weavers' sole target in the uprising was the destruction of power looms in cotton mills. It was well organised and disciplined, led by local weavers who were appointed as 'captains'. It was a symbolic action aiming to draw political attention and much needed financial assistance to the desperate plight of the weavers' communities. It was a direct response to government failure to support starving weavers during the economic depression of 1825 to 1827.

More than 1,100 power looms were destroyed over the four days and the 1714 Riot Act was read on several occasions across the region during the uprising.

Whilst there were injuries to protestors on the first two days of the uprising, as they marched through Accrington, Oswaldtwistle, Blackburn and Darwen down to Helmshore and Haslingden, it was not until the third day that the military decided to make a stand. When the protestors reached Chatterton, on the outskirts of Ramsbottom, the Riot Act was read, and troops opened fire. At 11:00am on 26 April 600 bullets were fired into a crowd of 3,000 protestors. Six people died on the spot: James Lord, John Ashworth, James Rothwell, Richard Lund, Mary Simpson and James Whatacre. The number who died later of their wounds remains unclear, but it is known that a seventh protestor died on 26 September 1826 due to a 'visitation of God' (a heart attack) brought on after receiving a death sentence.

Yet the massacre at Chatterton - redefined as a 'riot' or 'fight' - seems to have been largely forgotten. There was no public access to the Chatterton inquests and, despite claims that soldiers opened fire because they feared for their lives in the face of a violent crowd, no protestors were prosecuted. The Rifle Corps was quickly redeployed to Portugal.

Forty-one people involved in the uprising received the death penalty. All but 10 had their sentences commuted to imprisonment, but the remaining protestors, including Mary Hindle who had merely been an observer, were transported to Australia. Mary Hindle took her own life some years later, in despair at the loss of her family and loss of hope of ever returning to Lancashire. Equally tragically, when charitable financial support from London was allocated to the weavers, much of it was surreptitiously acquired by the mill owners to replace their destroyed power looms. Many hundreds died of starvation after the uprising, including 137 children under the age of 4 who died in Haslingden between April 1826 and March 1827.

The work of remembrance

The 200th anniversary of the weavers' uprising is only four years away. Earlier this year a new 'Weavers Uprising Bicentennial Committee' charity was formed in remembrance of all those who died and to raise the profile of this hugely significant

moment in Lancashire history. The charity was formally launched during the inaugural 'Weavers uprising remembrance walk' at Whinney Hill on the morning of 24 April 2022. The walk covered approximately 45 miles in five days and followed (broadly) in the footsteps of the weavers. On 26 April a wreath was laid to commemorate the six people who died at Chatterton. There was coverage of the walk by local newspapers and BBC radio Lancashire, and in a 44-minute documentary by True Level Media.

Archival research is currently being undertaken, using 37 parish records in East Lancashire, to uncover for the first time how many people died in 1826-7 because of starvation or related causes. The bicentennial committee is also working with the Open University to make a mini documentary on the Chatterton Massacre. We will also consider some of the reasons why the events have remained hidden for many years and emphasise the importance of naming the event for what it is – a massacre.

In the longer term, the bicentennial committee hopes to work for the public benefit in preparation for the 2026 bicentennial. The objects of the CIC are, in brief: to stimulate interest in the heritage of east Lancashire through events and other cultural activities; to carry out research and develop educational resources about the event and the consequences of starvation in east Lancashire 1826-7; and to promote a lasting legacy through self-guided walks and information boards, and lobbying for pathway repairs to help promote tourism and remembrance.

The committee is already engaging with local councils, MPs, museums, heritage societies and universities to help generate interest and to work towards a fitting form of remembrance for all who died and the thousands of local people who suffered terribly during this time. The committee would be delighted to hear from other local groups who would like to collaborate in the 200th anniversary preparations. For more information:

- Facebook: <https://bit.ly/3I527NO>
- Twitter: [@uprisingweavers](https://twitter.com/uprisingweavers)
- Four blogs for the Open University: <https://bit.ly/3bxke2y>
- True Level Media documentary: <https://youtu.be/wDXTYB0IZes>

David Scott has been with the Open University since 2016, in the School of Social Sciences and Global Studies, and a visiting scholar at several universities internationally. His principal area of research and publications is criminology; he has published numerous books and edited specialist publications.

FRIENDS OF WINCKLEY SQUARE

The Friends produce an interesting and colourful newsletter with information about this historic area in the centre of Preston. Email enquiries@winckley.org.uk if you wish to receive a regular copy. With the input of several other organisations, the interest of the Friends encompasses the history of the buildings as well as the care and use of the gardens in the square.



Red Rose Collections, Lancashire
County Council. ID: 214171

The May/June issue contains a fascinating outline of research carried out by Susan Douglass into the history of number 5. She used multiple sources, including of course the nearby Lancashire Archives, to tell the story of the building from the laying of the foundation stone up to the present day. It was built by Thomas Miller Jnr, one of Preston's wealthiest mill owners, who donated the land on which the eponymous park now stands.

Susan has a personal interest in the house, having spent some time there when it was used as a school. She gives three talks about the house, such was the wealth of information she found.

[The Federation published a book *Lancashire studies: Historical essays in honour of Alan Crosby*, which contains a contribution by Geoff Timmins: *Working at home during the nineteenth century: a case study of Winckley Square, Preston*. In surveying the use made of various properties in the square, he mentions Christopher Bland Walker, an attorney who at one time was one of the occupants of number 5. Copies of the book may be obtained by emailing the Federation – details from the website: www.lancshrehistory.org. – Ed]

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- Dr Mike Winstanley (Lancaster University): 'Life in a Cotton Town'.
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- Café on site

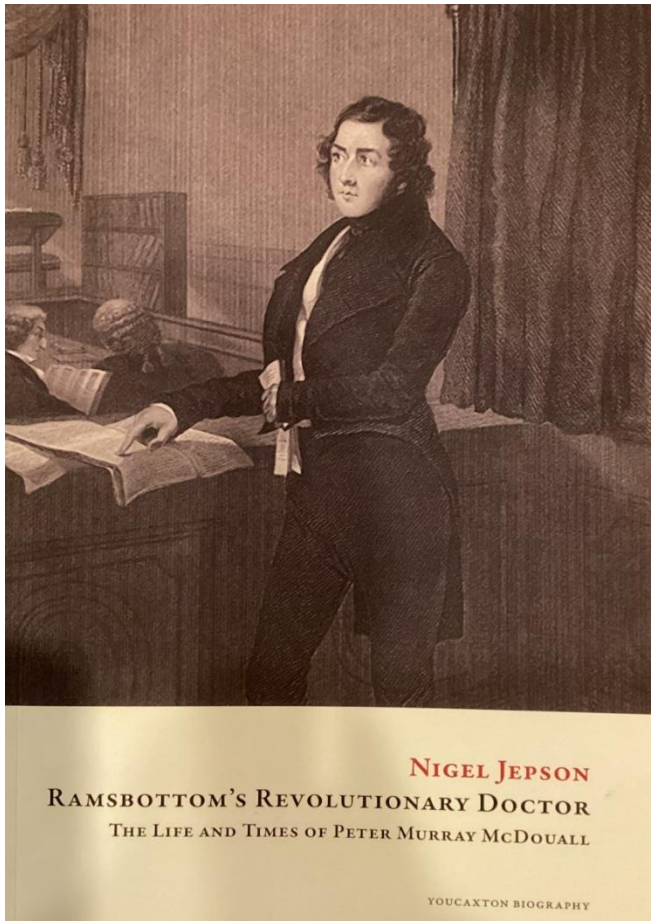
As it is our first organised study day for over two years, the Friends are subsidising this trip to encourage everyone back. £10 members, £15 non-members (plus booking fee).



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<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/study-day-at-queen-street-mill-tickets-369742769577>

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



Ramsbottom's Revolutionary Doctor: The life and times of Peter Murray McDouall

by Nigel Jepson

Publisher: Youcaxton Biography
ISBN 9781914424373

To order a copy of the book for £13 incl. p&p (or £10.99 if collected in person) contact Nigel Jepson on tel. 07713600282 or via email jepsonnigel@btinternet.com

This biography tells the exciting tale of a courageous young man who sacrificed both his medical career and his family in order to fight for the cause of Chartism, principally in Lancashire.

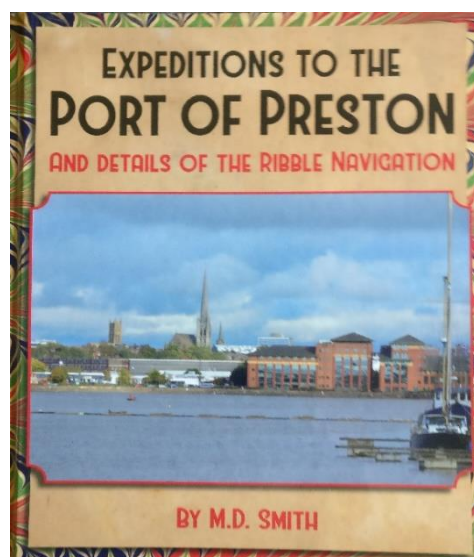
Tragically his life, after bouts of arrest and imprisonment, was destined to end at the age of 40 in Australia.

EXPEDITIONS TO THE PORT OF PRESTON AND DETAILS OF THE RIBBLE NAVIGATION

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Review by Bob Dobson

There have been three previous books about Preston dock and the navigation of the river between it and Lytham, published in 1938, 1986 and 1987. This one

complements them nicely, though it does much more than conduct the reader around the dock, as some of its many photographs are of the town in past years, along with some artefacts connected with the town's past. These were from the treasure box of a long-time collector of paraphernalia connected with Proud Preston.

He, the late Roy Paget, had bought a cache of photos and some notes which related to a 3-day research trip made by a Mr K G C Wilson in the 1950s. Enquiries to trace Mr Wilson are still on-going. He had his photo taken on board a pilot boat sailing into the dock from Lytham.

The author/publisher, David Smith, had sold the notes and some of the artefacts shown in the book to Roy Paget and when Roy died David set about compiling this book at the suggestion of Roy's widow, Maureen. The book is dedicated to Roy's memory.

Very usefully, the book's endpapers show two maps and a plan of the dock. Along with the photos are reproduced some early engravings, all of a good size. Many of the photos of the dock have not previously been published. This is what will make the book complementary to the three earlier books. All four should be on a Prestonian's bookshelves.

I commend this impressive book to readers.

THE STORY OF A MONUMENT:

The Promenade Lifeboat Memorial, St Anne's on the Sea

Andrew Walmsley

On starting a role at St Anne's Library as a Community History Manager in 2009, I was told of the *Mexico* lifeboat disaster and its monument on the promenade close to the pier. I had not come across the story before or paid much attention to the monument when I had visited the town. Thirteen years later, I am so immersed in both that I have to remind myself that most people would be unaware of the tragic story or one of the most striking pieces of public art in the north west.

In 2016, after leaving Lancashire County Council, I began a History MA at Lancaster University. My dissertation subject was the early history of St Anne's, particularly its identity following the laying of the foundation stone in 1875. The last chapter focussed on the *Mexico* disaster and the monument, which is now the subject of my PhD research. This has taken me in all kinds of fascinating directions. Two of the most useful primary sources have been the Frank Kilroy Collection at Lancashire Archives [DDX 3123] and the archives of Lytham St Anne's RNLI.

The lifeboat disaster

The *Mexico* disaster gets its name from the German barque *Mexico* which ran into difficulties on the night of 9th/10th December 1886. It had sailed from Liverpool, laden with cargo bound for Ecuador, only to be blown into the Ribble Estuary in a violent storm. It ran aground near Southport.

In the rescue attempts all thirteen men from the St Anne's Lifeboat *Laura Janet* were lost, along with 14 of the sixteen-man crew of the Southport boat, *Eliza Fernley*. The deaths of 27 men still represents the greatest loss of life in a British lifeboat disaster. The Lytham lifeboat, *Charles Biggs*, actually effected the rescue of the *Mexico* crew.



The monument

Disaster funds were set up to support the bereaved families, which raised about £30,000 in a relatively short space of time; this money was used to support the families of the deceased through to the 1930s. Surplus funds were earmarked to provide memorials to the men. A competition for the commission was won by William Birnie Rhind from Edinburgh with a design for the figurative sculpture of a watchful lifeboatman looking out to sea.

The success of the monument in its heyday Although at first simply a memorial to the lifeboat crew, it became much more. St Anne's was a newly developing seaside resort in the late 1880s and the monument quickly became an emblem for the town with its image appearing on many Victorian and Edwardian postcards and souvenirs. The process was initiated by the unveiling of the monument in May 1888, by no means a mournful or funereal event. It is striking that the town was described by the *Manchester Times* as being 'in a state of picturesque excitement' and the *Lytham Times* used the occasion to celebrate the 'progress of the ideal town'. [The St. Anne's Lifeboat Disaster - Unveiling of the Monument to the Crew', *Lytham Times*, 25 May 1888, p. 5; 'The Lifeboat Memorial at St Anne's', *Manchester Times*, 26 May 1888.]



There were many reasons why the monument would have resonated in this seaside town in late Victorian England. As well as embodying the maritime nation it also captured a sense of stoic valour which chimed with the high social tone which St Anne's sought to exemplify.

The celebration of the bravery of ordinary people was a notable trope in the period and has come to be viewed by John Price and others as 'everyday heroism'. The late 19th century dialect writer John Trafford Clegg epitomised this well in relation to the monument:

Come here, yo sluttlerin romance-writing folk, at cawn't dhraw a character beaut lappin him i' fine clooas and fillin his pockets wi' gowd come here, takkin yor eyen off ancient histry a minute to look what's undher yor noses, an, tell me iv this rough, everyday sublime shape hasn't as mich peawer an' poethry abeaut it as yor fanciful pictures of Dick Lionheart and' sichlike "heroes"... [John Trafford Clegg, *The Works of John Trafford Clegg ('Th' Owd Weighver') : Stories, Sketches, and Rhymes, Chiefly in the Rochdale Dialect* (Rochdale : Printed by J. Clegg, the Aldine Press, 1895), p. 444.]

The monument through time After the 1930s, however, the monument was less useful as a tourist symbol for St Anne's and by the 1960s and 70s it was not used by the official tourist guides which instead focussed on diversions and carefree leisure.

That is not to say that the monument has become irrelevant, but its meaning has shifted to become a totem for local heritage and an emblem of commemorations for the RNLI both locally and nationally, particularly since the centenary commemorations in 1986.

This sense of heritage hasn't always centred solely on St Anne's, and this is no doubt connected in part to the town's amalgamation with Lytham in 1922 and both being subsumed into Fylde Borough from 1974. However, propelled by the creation of the town council in 2005, St Anne's has begun to develop its own sense of identity once again and within this context the ties with the monument have become stronger. Indeed, there are often references to the monument on St Anne's Past Facebook pages with a palpable sense of dismay about the utilitarian toilet blocks which have been the backdrop to the monument since the 1960s.

Recently Fylde Council has consulted on the development of the town centre and sections of the promenade. There are suggestions that some planting should be moved, opening up parts of the promenade, including the monument, to the sea and estuary. However, the monument itself is not referenced at all on the display boards for the development plans. ['St Anne's-on-the-Sea: Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan - Display Boards' <<https://new.fylde.gov.uk/stannesregen/>>] It will be interesting to see whether, following this consultation, the monument has a higher status for Fylde Council.

So, the life of the monument is a story that continues right up to our own times, and I will incorporate its roles in present day St Anne's into the final draft of my thesis – hopefully sometime in 2024!

For further information see <https://stonesermons.blogspot.com/> and

<https://www.research.lancs.ac.uk/portal/en/people/andrew-walmsley>

**Don't forget to apply for the
Federation Day School on 5 November!**