



LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

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VIEW FROM THE CHAIR



At the Federation AGM in March we said our very fond farewells to **Diana Winterbotham**, as she stepped down from the committee. Diana has been one of the key figures in Lancashire's local history circles for an amazing six decades. Her first job was as a very junior library assistant at the Weaste branch of Salford Corporation libraries, then in 1960 she was appointed readers' adviser and senior assistant librarian at Eccles public library. During her time at Salford in the 1950s, and particularly after the move to Eccles, she became deeply interested in local history, and in 1961 joined the Eccles & District Local History Society (founded in 1956). In 1964 she became reference and local history librarian at Swinton & Pendlebury Libraries, and her lifelong love of the subject was confirmed. Diana's seven years at Swinton were crucial, giving her an in-depth knowledge of local history sources and research methods.

From there, in 1971, she was appointed county local studies librarian with Lancashire County Libraries, based in Preston. This was a new post, in a newly-

created section of the service, the aim being to build up a major resource of printed material – the county local studies collection – by bringing together the scattered holdings of branch libraries across the county, and undertaking a systematic policy of acquiring new material. Now housed at Lancashire Archives, this collection is a uniquely important resource for local historians in the County Palatine, based on her tremendous work over 22 years in post, and which has been extended and kept up to date by Diana's successors since her retirement in 1993.

When I first joined the committee of the Lancashire Local History Federation in 1986, Diana was already there – indeed, was a founder-member of the Federation in 1973. That means that she has been a stalwart of the organisation for almost half a century. And what a huge contribution she has made in that time. We have gained immeasurably from her involvement, drawing upon her tremendous knowledge of the county's history and her widespread contribution to other societies and organisations. She has been a speaker on countless occasions, has arranged day schools and other events up and down the county, has given us the benefit of her sound advice, wisdom and great imagination on so many occasions, and has worked tirelessly for 'the cause'. We are all deeply in her debt.

What's more, Diana is a lovely person, a delight to work with – full of humour (often pleasingly sharp!), lively and stimulating, always buzzing with ideas, practical and sensible about putting on events and activities, but invariably enthusiastic and supportive. We will miss her wonderful contribution to the committee, but know that she isn't giving up her local history interests. She continues to research and to write, especially about the medieval local history of south-east Lancashire, her 'home territory'. In 1993, when she retired, I edited a volume of essays written by friends and colleagues to thank her for her work: *Lancashire Local Studies in honour of Diana Winterbotham* (published by Carnegie in conjunction with the Lancashire Local History Federation). Almost thirty years later, in 2020, when I was marking A Certain Birthday, the LLHF gave me the surprise of my life by publishing a book of essays dedicated to me (*Lancashire Studies: historical essays in honour of Alan Crosby*). Diana was the person who suggested that project, gracefully returning the compliment, and she wrote one of the essays. That gives me enormous pleasure. So, Diana, from all of us, our heartfelt thanks for all that you have done, and our very warmest good wishes.

Alan Crosby

LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES



RETIREMENT OF JACQUIE CROSBY

Jacque Crosby retired as Archive Service Manager at the end of March. After being awarded an MA from Oxford University, followed by a Diploma in Archive Studies, she worked in Norfolk Record Office for four years. She joined Lancashire Archives in 1987.

During her time in charge of the Archives she has overseen major changes and navigated the results of reorganisations within the council. The last two years of Covid restrictions have been particularly challenging, but the online events have attracted audiences far and wide.

One of the noticeable differences is that, following a re-modelling of the physical space, the Archives became much more welcoming and accessible to visitors. School visits are hosted, and members of staff go out to libraries and other organisations, to emphasise the important place the Archives has in the cultural life of the county.

Jacquie has promoted the volunteer programme, recognising the considerable benefit to the service of being able to call on the freewill services of people who in their turn have shown great loyalty. As a result, major projects have been undertaken, such as Whittingham Lives, which could not have been accomplished without them.

Jacquie has been a stalwart supporter of the Friends of Lancashire Archives, the Lancashire Place Name Survey, and the Lancashire Local History Federation.

An increasing amount of the holdings of the Archives is now available online. Whilst this is of great benefit to remote researchers, she has been at pains to emphasise that in many cases there is no substitute for seeing and handling original material.

All this has been combined with her other duties within the management team of Archives, libraries and museums, and against a backdrop of reduced resources.

As she neared retirement, Jacquie did not slacken her pace in leading future planning: developing resources to support schools with local history, starting new digitisation projects, working on the audio collections, and restarting the family history surgeries, ably hosted by members of the Preston branch of the Lancashire Family History and Heraldry Society. The Archive Accreditation report called for some community engagement analysis: a consultant was engaged to do this, and Jacquie's successor will no doubt wish to use the results to plan for the future.

The April edition of the Archives newsletter contains a reflection by Jacquie about her long career there – email archives@lancashire.gov.uk for a copy.

This is just a very short summary of Jacquie's contribution to local history. She will be greatly missed, but has left the Archives in an excellent position to face the challenges ahead.

NEW ARCHIVES MANAGER

Alex Miller comes to Lancashire from his post in Wigan. He worked for Archives: Wigan & Leigh for nearly fifteen years after completing professional training at the University of Liverpool, and for the last ten years has managed the Archives & Local Studies service, its staff and volunteers. The service in Wigan has undergone a huge transformation in recent years with the completion in early 2021 of state-of-the art new facilities at Leigh Town Hall, funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and

Wigan Council. Alex developed the funding application and project-managed various aspects of the capital works, including development of the new exhibition space and getting the new service up and running last Spring.

Alex's new role will involve many challenges, but he will find that Jacquie has left the service in the best position from which to take the Archives forward.

He said, 'I'm excited to be joining the team at Lancashire Archives and look forward to meeting all the Friends, researchers, and volunteers very soon. If you see me around the searchroom please do say hello'.



Alex adds, "As Lancashire Archives fully reopens following lockdown restrictions we are getting busier every day and we'd be delighted to welcome you, so if you would like to visit please have a [look on our website](#) for the latest opening times and information on how to request collections."

FRIDAY TALKS (VIA ZOOM)

20 May 14:15: How does your garden grow? Victoria McCann presents archives relating to the history of gardens.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82396141539?pwd=cGhwL3BVTkZYNWpDcjBhKy8ybVhsQT09> Meeting ID: 823 9614 1539; Passcode: 562935

17 June 12:15: Colour in the Archives Kathryn Newman will showcase some of the colourful items in the collection.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85265963941?pwd=eUdMQzhiU1d4WjRjBmdyTEpNMUNjdz09> Meeting ID: 852 6596 3941; Passcode: 860822

15 July 14:15: Crash, bang, wallop, what a picture! David Tilsley will reveal a selection of fascinating images from the collections.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85797653089?pwd=QlVnZEVCRUZQczhkMktCczBBcVBwdz09> Meeting ID: 857 9765 3089; Passcode: 711357

Two events on Friday 17 June:

10:00-12:00: Family history drop-in surgery hosted by Preston Family History Society.

13:00-16:00: An exhibition and readings from the creative workshop 'All life is here'. In collaboration with Preston Arts Association for Preston Arts Festival 2022.

Thoughts from Lancashire Archives: a series of podcasts with conversations about interesting subjects, taken from nine hundred years of Lancashire's history housed at the Archives. Access via www.lancashire.gov.uk/archives

1. **Thoughts on food** Dr Alan Crosby
2. **Thoughts on sport** Dr Peter Holme
3. **Thoughts on Lancashire witches** Professor Robert Poole
4. **Thoughts on Christmas food and entertainment** Dr Alan Crosby
5. **Thoughts on the history of pandemics** Bernard Melling & Dr Alan Crosby
6. **Thoughts on women's history** Anna Watson & Professor Amanda Vickery

Friends of Lancashire Archives

The Friends' support of the Archives is invaluable, not only financially, but also in underpinning the service as a whole. If you would like to become a member of the committee, email membership@flarchives.co.uk. For more details of their activities, or to sign up to receive the newsletter, visit www.flarchives.co.uk.

The current newsletter has some fascinating articles, including a profile of Sir Simon Towneley KCVO. Sir Simon is 100 years old, and was a prime mover in the project to establish the Friends of Lancashire Archives. He is a former High Sherriff, County Councillor and Lord Lieutenant. He has long been a champion of the importance of archives, and of Lancashire Archives in particular.

SPEAKERS' CORNER

For some years a list of speakers was made available to Federation members, but because of data protection regulations this is no longer the case.

Instead, we are inviting speakers who wish to publicise their talks to contact the newsletter so that their details can reach a wide audience.

If you would like to do so, please send:

- Name
- Contact details
- Subject(s) covered
- Areas where you are willing to give talks
- Whether you would deliver over Zoom, if asked
- 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.

We look forward to hearing from you.

mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk Marianne Howell, Newsletter editor.

We already have the details of one speaker:

Frank Pleszak

Formerly a WHO tropical pest control expert and IT consultant . A beekeeper, author, and blogger specialising in Polish history, aviation, and the local history around his home in the foothills of the Peak District near Manchester. He is a regular contributor to many local history societies, and has published several books and magazine articles. Frank is often able to give talks at short notice.

Email: frank.pleszak@gmail.com

Phone: 07720 901656

Location: Marple (but willing to travel)

Can offer talks over Zoom, but would prefer in person

Talks offered:

- The last coal miner (Ludworth Moor colliery)
- The High Peak Dambusters
- The fatal bombing of New Mills and Hayfield in 1942
- The fate of the Poles from eastern Poland after 1940
- The little known but highly significant battle of Lake Naroch on the Eastern Front 1916
- The Battles of Monte Cassino 1944
- Beekeeping (Currently being updated)
- Mills of Mellor & Marple Bridge (Currently being updated)

THE FEDERATION AGM WAS HELD ON 22 MARCH

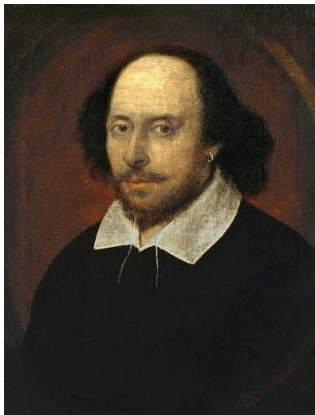
The event took place virtually, and drew an attendance of 60 people. In his previously circulated report, the Chair, Dr Alan Crosby, had looked forward to a resumption of events in person, beginning with the At Home, to be hosted by Westhoughton History Group on 14 May. *[There may still be a last minute chance to book!]*

He thanked Diana Winterbotham on her retirement from the committee, for her long and dedicated service to the Federation and to local history in Lancashire. [See *View from the Chair* above.]

Alan paid tribute to the late Morris Garratt, the Federation President and former chair of the committee.

Alan also marked the retirement of Jacquie Crosby as Archive Service Manager, and strong supporter of the Federation, by the presentation of a rose and a gardening token. This was easily accomplished, as they were sharing a computer for the meeting! [See Lancashire Archives item above.]

The Treasurer, Peter Bamford, had circulated his report showing a healthy financial situation, partly because there had less expenditure, but also increased subscriptions from a growing membership.



The business meeting was followed by a talk from Dr Mike Winstanley, retired senior lecturer at Lancaster University. Did Shakespeare spend some of his lost years as a teenager in Lancashire? Did he work for the family living at Hoghton Tower? In this fascinating talk, with his usual ebullient style, Mike carefully examined every shred of evidence from multiple sources which he had gleaned from previous authors and researchers, and from his own visits to several archives. After listening to the talk, it would be a bold person who concluded, without any doubt, Shakespeare that did grace Lancashire with his presence.

NEWS FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES

BLACKPOOL & FYLDE HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The society has paid tribute to Ted Lightbown (1943-2022).

He was Blackpool and Fylde's foremost local historian, with an unrivalled knowledge of the local area.

He had been a stalwart member of the society since the late 1970s, and its secretary for forty years. His regular presentations to the society were always engaging and highly informative and he had an extraordinary capacity to contextualise people, places and events to enable the audience to make greater sense of Blackpool's past. He instigated many local exhibitions and was also involved in setting up a local history room on the first floor of the Grundy Art Gallery.

He assisted local organisations with their archive collections and local history events and was the voluntary archivist for the Pleasure Beach for over twenty years. He collaborated with other esteemed local historians, such as Norman Cunliffe and Alan Stott, on several publications for B&FHS. In 1994 Ted published his own fascinating book, *Blackpool: A pictorial history*. Additionally, he co-published two collections of old Blackpool postcards and, with the same co-author, *Blackpool through time*.

He was unstinting in helping people with queries, often spending countless hours in his quest to provide accurate and detailed information, always based on thorough research. A true gentleman, quiet and unassuming, Ted was most generous with his time, keen to help others learn and was highly regarded in his field of expertise.

Blackpool and Fylde Historical Society has lost one of its most highly respected and long-standing members but Ted and his contributions to the Society will never be forgotten.

Facebook [@Blackpoolhistory](#)

HISTORIC SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE

Wednesday 29 June 2022 at 14:00 (via Zoom): *John Balshaw's Jigge: Revelry and Royalism in Restoration Lancashire* Dr Jenni Hyde, Associate Lecturer at Lancaster University.

John Balshaw's Jigge, a little-known manuscript held by the British Library, was written in the small village of Brindle, Lancashire, at the time of the Restoration. This exciting document is one of the latest known examples of a stage 'jig' - a form of musical entertainment combining words, music and dance - which had been popular in the Elizabethan period. It is sung throughout to ballad melodies which we can assume would have been familiar in Lancashire at the time.

The jig is particularly noteworthy because of its Lancashire setting and its Civil War context. This was a time of unprecedented upheaval, dividing family and friends along religious and constitutional lines. The jig reflects these concerns and provides a fascinating insight into popular entertainment in rural Lancashire.

Dr Hyde is the author of *Singing the News: ballads in mid-Tudor England*, and *John Balshaw's Jigge: revelry and royalism in Restoration Lancashire*.

For tickets for this talk: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/288465787937>.

ROOLEY MOOR NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM The archaeological reports for Healey Dell near Rochdale are available online by visiting the Forum website <https://www.rmfn.org.uk/healey-dell-report-archaeological-survey/>.

REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE

Wednesday 18 May The RHC Director, Dr Fiona Edmonds, will lead a small group visit to Clitheroe Castle, to include a talk in the education room about the 1138 Battle of Clitheroe, and a visit to Edisford Bridge, the alleged site of the battle. Numbers strictly limited.

[Regional Heritage Centre | Lancaster University](#)

HOLCOMBE MOOR HERITAGE GROUP The Ministry of Defence has awarded £10,000 to this community group, based near Bury, to continue their research into the archaeological history of Holcombe Moor, where the armed forces have a training centre. The group has a long and fruitful association with the training area, having completed several surveys and digs on the site.



The most recent investigation, led by Neil Coldrick, the group's Archaeological Director, identified the remains of a rare medieval ironworking site. The award, which comes from the MOD's Conservation Stewardship Scheme, will be used to commission a geophysical survey of the area, analysis of medieval pottery and slag from the site, and radiocarbon dating. Neil said, "The commitment and moral support we've received from the MOD over the years has been tremendous and has resulted in the discovery of a rare, well-preserved, iron furnace site, previously unknown in the area. We know from our desk-based research and study of technical aerial images that there was a lot of activity in this area over a long period of time".

Neil Coldrick (right) and former Greater Manchester Heritage Management Director, Norman Redhead, examine the medieval furnace at Holcombe Moor Military Training Centre

Phil Abramson, the MOD Archaeology Advisor for the region commented: "Volunteers of the Heritage Group have worked for several years on the training area using their own funds and resources to do their work. This grant is an endorsement of our belief that the Heritage Group are the right people to investigate the history of the area". The activity of the group has to dovetail with military training, and access on to the site is dependent on the consent and support of the MOD.

SADDLEWORTH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Wednesday 11 May 19:30: Elizabeth Raffald - Manchester's 18th Century Domestic Goddess - Suzy Appleton

Wednesday 8 June 19:30: The origins of King Arthur - Emeritus Professor Nick Higham

Saturday 16 July 19:30: Why the Pennines played a leading role in the Industrial Revolution (Bernard Barnes Memorial Lecture) - Dr Stephen Counce

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



TAMESIDE LOCAL HISTORY FORUM Tree Planting

On Thursday 24 March a silver birch was planted in Stamford Park (Ashton-under-Lyne/Stalybridge) in memory of past members of Tameside Local History Forum.

Chris Clough, the secretary of the forum, thought of the idea at the funeral of long-standing member Alan Bacon in January.

Forum members agreed it would be a very fitting way to commemorate both the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the forum's lost members.

The tree is near the Aviary in the Park.

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

Sunday 8 May 14:00: A walk round Manchester statues with Terry Wyke

Meeting place: Duke of Wellington statue, Piccadilly.

Public statues have been in the news, so this is an opportune moment to look at them afresh and be reminded of the historical contexts which led to the commissioning and siting of some of the city's most prominent statues and monuments. Not all public memorials and statuary have survived, so consideration will also be given to those many memorials which have been removed. The walk will begin in Piccadilly Gardens to consider the statues raised on Joseph Paxton's esplanade before going on towards Albert Square via St Peter's Square. The walk concludes in St Ann's Square. www.landcas.org.uk .

NEWS ROUNDUP

1921 CENSUS

The National Archives has made available two regional hubs which will provide free online access to the 1921 census of England and Wales. They are at the National Library of Wales and Manchester Central Library. There is also free access at TNA in Kew. Otherwise, the only other way to access the census is via Findmypast, a paid service.

Access at the Manchester Central Library, on St Peter's Square, Manchester, will be supported by the Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society helpdesk and the Archives+ Team www.archivesplus.org.

Making the census available represents the largest project ever completed by TNA and Findmypast, consisting of the conservation and digitisation of over 30,000 bound volumes of original documents.

TNA have launched **20sPeople**, a programme of events and activities, connecting the lives of people one hundred years ago with our own <https://bit.ly/3J2w6ob>. This includes an exhibition, **The 1920s: Beyond the Roar** (until 11 June).

BOWLAND FESTIVAL EVENT

Tuesday 10 May online 18:30 – 20:00: *Medieval Bridges of the Ribble Valley*

How many medieval bridges are there in the Ribble Valley? In 2017, chartered civil engineer Chris Hudson was approached by Clitheroe Civic Society to answer that very question. Chris's presentation will provide an insight into the forensic approach to dating masonry arch bridges, and is underpinned by interesting facts relating to local history, the development of the highway infrastructure and the principles of stone arch bridges.

The event is **free, but booking is essential**. Email sandra.silk@lancashire.gov.uk or phone 07973 923142.

A STATE WITHIN A STATE?

THE MAKING OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER 1066-1422

Dr Fiona Edmonds, Director of the Regional Heritage Centre at Lancaster University, is involved with this major research project, which is a joint venture between the university, the universities of Cambridge and Lincoln, and the National Archives.

The launch of the project marks the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Boroughbridge and the execution of Thomas, the rebel earl of Lancaster, in 1322. This was the bloody end of a civil war that scarred one of England's most troubled and turbulent reigns, that of Edward II.

Thomas was the political successor of Simon de Montfort, champion of parliament and government reform. He was also the mightiest noble of the age, ruling the earldoms of Lancaster, Derby, Leicester, Lincoln and Salisbury.

The earldom of Lancaster was a vast state within a state, whose successor body is the Duchy of Lancaster. In 1399 the heir to the duchy, Henry of Bolingbroke, seized the throne as Henry IV. One of his first acts was to stipulate that the duchy should be held separately from all other Crown possessions and descend through the monarchy as a private estate. Today the estates of the duchy belong to the Queen (The Duke of Lancaster), and cover more than 18,000 hectares of rural land in England and Wales, around 36,000 hectares of foreshore properties, as well as thirteen historic properties, including Lancaster Castle and Bolingbroke Castle. For information, please see: <https://www.duchyoflancaster.co.uk/properties-and-estates/>.

The duchy's records form one of the largest private archives in the country. At their heart is the Great Cowcher Book of the Duchy of Lancaster (TNA, DL 42/1-2), compiled in around 1402. It is a deluxe, illuminated register of evidences of title for the duchy, containing 2,433 documents written in Latin and French. It is second only to Domesday Book as a record of medieval landholding, the lives of ordinary people, and the experiences of different ethnic and religious communities under the duchy's governance.

This research collaboration will reveal the contents of the Great Cowcher for the first time. On a far wider scale, it will transform the understanding of medieval society, including the Black Death; emphasise the importance of the duchy from Magna Carta onwards, and reveal the lives of ordinary people across four centuries. In addition, careful analysis of its physical nature will reveal secrets of the illuminators who created the lavish miniatures within, and compare their practice with other medieval scriptoria across England and Europe.

For more information on the project, visit

[A State Within a State? The Making of the Duchy of Lancaster | Lancaster University](#)

FRIENDS OF SALFORD CEMETERIES TRUST

The Spring newsletter contains comprehensive information about the activities of the trust, which are re-starting after Covid.

The aim is to have the AGM on **Tuesday 17 May** in the evening, to be confirmed when the venue is secured. As with most societies, they would welcome more members. Whilst some activities are still on hold, the following will take place:

- Sunday 31 July, Agecroft cemetery: Annual Lancaster Bomber memorial service
- Sunday 11 September, Weaste cemetery: Guided tour
- Saturday 29 October, Swinton: Salford Local History Festival
- Sunday 18 December, Agecroft and Peel Green cemeteries: Wreath laying ceremonies to remember the victims of Salford in the Blitz in WWII.

The newsletter contains interesting facts about some of the people buried in Salford cemeteries. For more information contact Pete Kilvert petekilvert@virginmedia.com.

BALH
BRITISH ASSOCIATION
FOR LOCAL HISTORY

LOCAL HISTORY DAY

Saturday 11 June 10:30-16:00

Conway Hall, London, in person
£37.50 (non-members), or

Available as a Zoom webinar £12.50
(non-members)

Highlights of the day:

- Post-Medieval manorial records – talk by Mark Forrest
- AGM
- Announcement of the winners of the inaugural BALH local history photographer of the year
- Announcement of the BALH awards for local historians
- Talk by Dr Janina Ramirez FRHistS. Dr Ramirez is a cultural historian, broadcaster and author, based at the University of Oxford

For more details visit www.balh.org.uk

The BALH website contains a short, introductory guide, '**How to get started using social media**'. The information is presented by Megan Kelleher, who is the BALH social media fellow, and a PhD student at the University of Kent.



MANCHESTER HISTORIES FESTIVAL

WEDNESDAY 8 - SUNDAY 12 JUNE

This year's theme is the environment and climate change. By exploring the past, Manchester Histories wants to inspire people to look at how they can take action for a better future for all.

A highlight will be the:

Celebration Day on Sunday 12 June at Gorton Monastery

[Manchester Histories – Connecting people through histories and heritage.](#)

ROOMS OF OUR OWN'

REVEALING THE HIDDEN 'HERSTORY' OF THE PANKHURST CENTRE

Thanks to funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Pankhurst Trust is working in partnership with Manchester Histories to uncover a chapter of the centre's history, which until now has largely been unexplored.

Although now recognised internationally as a site of historic importance, as the former home of Emmeline Pankhurst and the place where the suffragette movement was born, for many years the significance of the house was overlooked. It was thanks to women's activism that the quest began in the 1970s to save the building from the threat of demolition. The key focus of the project will be the Pankhurst Centre archive, with volunteers aged 18-25 working on the documents and

photographs which already exist in the archive, as well as capturing the stories and voices of campaigners from the 1970s to 2014. As it progresses the project will use the archive to inspire creativity, including the creation of original digital artwork, music and film.



The Pankhurst Centre

60-62 Nelson St, Manchester M13 9WP

Emmeline and her family lived here between 1898 and 1907. The first meeting of what became known as the suffragette movement took place in the parlour of the house.

The centre is the only place where members of the public can visit a former home of the Pankhurst family, and is the only museum dedicated to telling the story of women's fight for the right to vote.

The building continues the fight for women's equality today as the headquarters of Manchester Women's Aid, providing confidential services to victims of domestic abuse, and as a women's centre, supporting women's activism in Manchester and the local community. [The Pankhurst Centre, Manchester. 62 Nelson Street. \(pankhursttrust.org\).](http://pankhursttrust.org)

KIRKHAM IN AMOUNDERNESS LOCAL HISTORY AND HERITAGE CENTRE

Adrian Long recounts the establishment of this new centre

Many people in Kirkham knew **Martin Ramsbottom**, who was for many years a leading authority on the history of Kirkham in particular and the Fylde in general, and was the author of many local history publications including the concise history of St Michael's parish church.

When Martin moved into full-time residential care in late 2020, he called time on his work as a collector and archivist of material relating to local history. His family was keen to ensure that his lovingly curated collection remained in safe hands, and they approached St Michael's church for help in this matter; and we agreed to use an area of the newly redeveloped Spire Gallery to house and display Martin's collection of books and materials. When he died a few months later, his family confirmed that they wished the collection to be established as a lasting tribute to their father.



View of the Spire Gallery (Adrian Long)

The collection is based on Martin's own archives, including material previously on display in the short-lived Kirkham in Amounderness Museum (1997-2006) in the old Baths House. It comprises many fascinating books, documents, photographs, cuttings and artefacts about all aspects of Kirkham, Wesham and surrounding areas, with a wealth of material relating to St Michael's, including some precious original documents.

Our aspiration is to have the collection available by appointment as a reference resource for the local community. We will also share images, photographs and documents in our parish magazine and on social media to mark specific events, anniversaries and themes, and hold themed exhibitions to coincide with public events such as the Advent and Club Day fairs.

This generous gesture by Martin's family is also a fortuitous fit with the bicentenary of our church building in 2022 and with the associated **Project 2022**, whose aim is to "Help us to make St Michael's a heartbeat for the whole community", with one of the specific goals being to host heritage events. The programme, which runs throughout 2022, features a series of events and exhibitions celebrating our culture.

Since the establishment of the collection, we have been fortunate to engage the support of the government-funded high street regeneration programme, which includes significant provision for promotion of the town's culture and heritage, with an emphasis on improved community cohesion and the development of physical and emotional wellbeing through engagement in local culture and heritage. Interest from both within and well beyond the church community has been strong and sustained, and we have benefitted from the support and advice of the Lancashire Archives and Museum Service, as well as a small grant from a local heritage charity.

A monthly heritage open morning, held on the last Saturday of every month to coincide with the church's family breakfast event, has attracted visitors in large numbers who have enjoyed the chance to browse materials as well as enjoying the spectacular view from the gallery of this 200-year-old Grade II* listed building.

The people of St Michael's and the whole local community are most grateful to Martin and his family for giving us the opportunity to promote and celebrate the history and heritage of the town, and we are confident that the **Kirkham in Amounderness Local History and Heritage Centre** will continue to grow and develop as a community resource in our care.



An event to launch the new facility was held on 6 April. There is an audio version, with illustrative slides, of the lecture given that day, entitled *The Romans and before*, which was written and delivered by Sue Long, head of Latin at Kirkham Grammar School, and Thomas Hewitt, a history undergraduate at Durham University. It can be found at <https://youtu.be/kHvw3BulFR0>.

Anyone who wishes to find out more about the collection or to arrange a visit is welcome to contact Adrian mr.arlong@gmail.com.

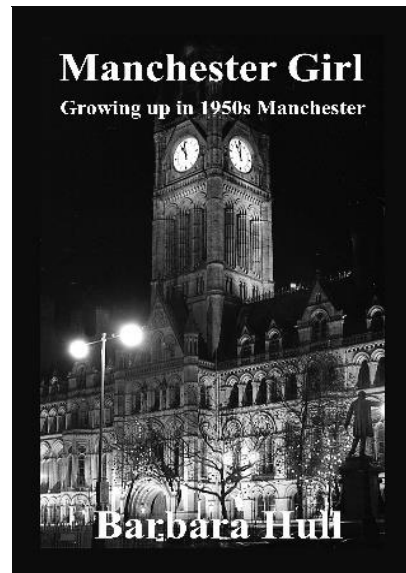
PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

MANCHESTER GIRL GROWING UP IN 1950S MANCHESTER

Barbara Hull

Independently published
Pbk £6.58 ISBN 979-8594802032
Kindle £4.99
Both available on Amazon

Barbara was born in Moss Side and has lived in Manchester for most of her life. During lockdown she wrote a small book both about her teenage years in the city and about the 1950s in general.



THE HISTORY OF THE TAWD VALE COLLIERY COMPANY



RESEARCHED & WRITTEN
BY
GEOFF BODEN

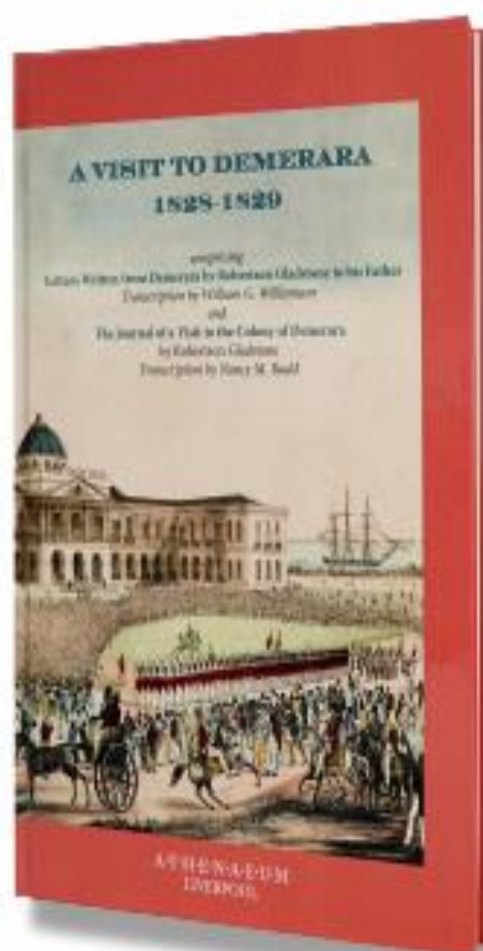
Skelmersdale Heritage Society is proud to announce its first publication, **The History of the Tawd Vale Colliery Company**, by Geoff Boden.

In the 19th century Skelmersdale exploded from a small rural community to a thriving mining town. Coal has thus been an important part of the town's heritage, and the Tawd Vale Colliery was at the forefront of the town's mining development.

Local historian Geoff Boden has painstakingly researched the records of the period to produce this extensive history of the Tawd Vale Colliery, from its origins in the coal rush of early Victorian days to the terrible disaster which caused its demise.

The book is A5 size with 76 pages and many interesting photographs. A few copies remain for sale at £8.50 and may be ordered by emailing Skelmersdaleheritage@gmail.com

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Between October 1828 and March 1829, Robertson Gladstone, the 23-year-old son of wealthy Liverpool merchant, politician, and slave plantation owner Sir John Gladstone, paid a working visit to the then British Colony of Demerara. The journal Robertson kept and the many letters he wrote to his father give us a fascinating insight into the running of sugar and cotton plantations in the days shortly before the ownership of slaves in the British colonies finally ended with the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act, 1833.

Famously, Sir John Gladstone received more compensation from the UK Government for the loss of over 2,500 enslaved workers from his plantations in Demerara and Jamaica than any other British claimant – £106,769 (the equivalent of up to £10 million today).

'Before and After' sections of the book provide a useful context for the interesting lives led by father and son.

Both Gladstones were proprietors of the Athenaeum, as were at least 24 others who had interests in Demerara plantations; a thumbnail sketch of each of them is given.

Available **NOW** from Athenaeum Reception
or order on-line: www.theathenaeum.org.uk

REQUESTS

Steve Brown would like to hear from readers who know interesting local stories which could be used as the basis for his song-writing

I'm a musician, composer and educator based in Longridge. I'm currently on the lookout for interesting stories with a Lancashire connection to use as inspiration for a set of songs I'm composing.

My interest in this area started when I was commissioned by the Harris Museum in Preston to create a fun, educational video for children, highlighting links to Preston's past. I researched Matthew Wade, 'the Banana King', who brought bananas from the West Indies to Preston over 100 years ago, and wrote a song about him.

My aim is to find other interesting characters, events or stories with a Lancashire connection to compose songs about. So far the stories that have stood out to me are: the murder of James Barton at the Button Pit in 1863, George Lyon the Upholland highwayman, Longridge Motor Racing Circuit, The Invincibles (Preston North End) and Wallace Hartley, the Titanic bandmaster.

If you have an interesting story that deserves to be made into a song please do get in touch! sbrownmusician@gmail.com.



Chorley Heritage Centre Support Group

President: Reverend John Cree

An appeal for support from Chorley Heritage Support Group

Since it was established the group has been very active, but has not yet achieved its aim of providing a heritage centre in the heart of the town. Ideally, this would be a central point for celebrating the heritage of the town by providing:

- A distribution point for a town trail
- An information point
- A meeting place for cultural and heritage groups
- A key part of an evolving civic centre
- An exhibition centre, available to local groups and individuals

The website contains a great deal of further information about achievements so far, and the case for a physical presence in the town.

If you feel that you can support this project, please log on to download a form, to be completed as soon as possible. **The group wishes to present its case by the time of the Platinum Jubilee on 2 June.** www.chorleyheritagecentre.co.uk.

RESEARCH ARTICLES

Edition 38 of the newsletter, published in February 2022, contained an interesting article, *Midwives in eighteenth century Chorley*. I regret that the name of the author, John E Harrison, was omitted in error. – Ed.

ROBERT TOWNLEY PARKER

Peter Smith has been researching the 19th century Preston MP, and invites anyone with further information to contact him



I've recently started working on a shortish biography of the 19th-century Preston MP Robert Townley Parker, which I thought was going to be a straightforward account of a 'Church and State' Tory and his hostility to the town's Catholics. This would have aligned him with the virulently anti-papist position of the town's Anglican clergy, led by the vicar, the Rev John Owen Parr. I had come to this view from reading the many references to Townley Parker in Nigel Morgan's Lancaster University MPhil thesis on politics in Preston in the first half of the 19th-century.

Wikimedia Commons

Nigel wrote:

The right wing, identified from 1835 to 1852 with the bigoted Protestant squire of Cuerden Hall, Robert Townley Parker, exploited the sectarian and anti-Irish animosities of the lower orders ... the Tories resorted to the 19th century equivalent of race riots: they attacked the Irish, ... possibly with the connivance of Robert Townley Parker, the Tory candidate ... Townley Parker denied that he was a *violent* Orangeman: he was not 'one who would flog alive all Roman Catholics'.

But when I started gathering material it soon became clear that Townley Parker was a far more interesting and complex character. This in no way diminishes Nigel's contribution to historical research - indeed, the people working on the next section of the History of Parliament project were delighted to discover Nigel's thesis, and his work will be incorporated in the section on the Preston constituency. It is simply that more resources have become available since he was writing.

Although a formidable opponent of any attempts to weaken the Church of England establishment, Townley Parker was a lifelong friend of many Catholics and supported many of that church's Lancashire projects. For example, in 1814, at the end of a European tour, he and his companion were granted an audience with Pope Pius VII, when Townley Parker would have just turned 20. He included among his friends the Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Manning, and the Catholic bishop of Liverpool,

who was a welcome guest at Townley Parker's home, Cuerden Hall. He saw to it that priests were provided for Catholics in the Preston House of Correction and in the county asylum, with their stipends paid by the county. When he decided not to contest his seat again a delegation of the town's leading Catholics visited him at Cuerden Hall and tried to persuade him to change his mind.

Politically, Townley Parker was an unlikely candidate for Preston, which was becoming increasingly industrial. He was a prominent member of the county's landed gentry, living on his rents and rigorously enforcing the game laws, both in court and on his estate, where an armed battle between his gamekeepers and a gang of poachers left one poacher dead and several badly injured.

He was a staunch opponent of Free Trade and firmly resisted many aspects of electoral reform, at a time when Preston was the scene of mass protests against the Corn Laws and in favour of such reform. Why did he persist in supporting measures unpopular in the town? In his defence he followed Edmund Burke in arguing that as MP he was the representative of his constituency, not its delegate:

I could have given my vote [in line with the town's Anti Corn Law Association] ... for the sake of *popularity* it would perhaps have been the most *expedient* conduct; but in so doing I must either have disguised my real sentiments ... or have acknowledged myself the Delegate of the Electors of Preston, and have abandoned all the feelings on an independent Member of Parliament. [*Emphasis in original.*]

Later he expressed himself more forcibly: 'I will either enjoy a seat in parliament unshackled, the independent representative of independent electors, or I must decline accepting it.'

Two public statues in Preston give a clear indication of Townley Parker's political views. When subscriptions were sought for a statue of Sir Robert Peel, he subscribed on the understanding that it was made clear that his donation was for Peel the man, not Peel the politician who had split his party. Yet when the former prime minister, the Earl of Derby, died Townley Parker showed his support for Derby's politics by leading the fund-raising for a statue and was instrumental in ensuring it was sited prominently in Preston and not in Lancaster, the other suggested site.

At the very end of his long life, in 1878, looking back on his political career, he said he was still unconvinced of the benefits of the century's parliamentary reforms. On Free Trade, he was still an opponent, arguing it was those countries that had maintained tariffs that had prospered at Britain's expense. He would certainly have supported Joseph Chamberlain's Imperial Preference tariffs.

There is clearly much more to Townley Parker than a superficial account of his career would suggest. I plan to compare and contrast the careers of Townley Parker and his contemporary, the social reformer Joseph Livesey, which I believe might help to illuminate the politics of Preston for much of the 19th century. However, I blundered

badly and blushing in my early researches on Livesey, and had to be reined in by the Preston historian Steve Harrison. To avoid more embarrassment I would like to make contact with anyone who could suggest avenues to explore or who would be willing to point out the grosser errors in anything I put on line on my website: www.prestonhistory.com. My research to date: <https://bit.ly/3v3ivcC>.

Peter Smith prestonhistory1@gmail.com

PEOPLE BURIED AT WEASTE CEMETERY

Pete Kilvert continues his research

JOSEPH ALONZO (1880–1935)

Joseph Alonzo was a Private in Company D of the 5th US Infantry during the Spanish – American War (1898). He came to Salford and became a dock labourer for the Manchester Ship Canal Company at Salford Docks.

He was born in 1880 at St. Sophie, Louisiana, USA. The small town (or Settlement as it was referred to in the Lower Coast Gazette of 5th September 1914), was located on the east bank of the Mississippi River, in the delta area about 40 miles south of New Orleans. The town was prone to flood (with several newspaper reports of levee breaches and inundation) and it no longer exists.

The Spanish-American War was triggered by the mysterious sinking of the US battleship *Maine* in Havana harbour on 15 February 1898. The conflict took place in Spanish colonies, mainly Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Philippines, which resulted in the US acquiring Spanish territories in Latin America and the western Pacific. The war was settled by the Treaty of Paris of 10 December 1898.

Joseph would have been 18 years old when the war started. It is likely that he volunteered and commenced training in New Orleans, (as the 1900 census records a Joseph Alonzo, aged 20 at 1st Precinct, New Orleans City, Ward 3), but the war was over before he was fully trained, and Company D did not take part. However, prior to the war, revolutionaries in the Philippines had been fighting for independence from the Spanish. They assisted the US forces during the war, but then found that the USA had become their masters. So when the revolutionaries started fighting for their independence against the USA, Company D and other US units were dispatched to the Philippines to counter the rebels. This became known as the Philippine Insurrection, starting on 4 February 1899 and not ending until 4 July 1902.

It is not clear when and why Joseph came to Salford; the next trace of him was on the 1920 electoral register, living at a lodging house, 4 Bloom Street, Salford. On the 1921 census Joseph's address was Corporation Model Lodging House, Bloom Street, Salford. He was aged 41 and was single. His occupation was dock labourer, employed by the Manchester Ship Canal Company at Salford Docks.

The electoral register of 1931 shows Joseph living at 2 Comus Street, Salford. Four years later, in February 1935, he died at Hope Hospital, Salford, aged 55.

He was buried on 23 February at Weaste Cemetery, grave N 442 in the Roman Catholic portion. The service was conducted by Fr L Delaney, Priest of All Souls and St John Vianney RC Church.



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