



# LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

## NEWSLETTER ISSUE NO. 46, FEBRUARY 2024

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Please see the website [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org) for more contact details.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**The brief AGM will be held over Zoom on Wednesday 6 March at 6.30pm.** Zoë Lawson, the membership secretary, will be sending out papers in advance. We are always keen to hear from anyone who would like to join our friendly, proactive committee, so do look out for the proposal form.

**Then at 6.50 we will enjoy a talk by Jonathan Healey, entitled 'The birth of the Poor Law in Lancashire'.** He writes: *Lancashire doesn't have the same volume of overseers' accounts as other counties, which has led some historians to suggest the county was 'backward' and 'underdeveloped'. It does, however, have a remarkable archive of Quarter Sessions material, which means the county can give a fresh and interesting perspective on the early development of England's unique system of poor relief. This talk looks at the appearance of formal poor relief in Lancashire, and thinks about what this archive of material can tell us about the lives of the very poor.*

Jonathan Healey is Associate Professor of Social History, Kellogg College, University of Oxford. His research interests include the poor laws, famine and food shortages, and the history of common land and landholding.

# VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

## TRAVELLERS' TALES

Travellers' impressions of places visited or passed through can be a very informative source for local history, giving us descriptions of the physical appearance and character of a town or city, a landmark building or a landscape. They may give different and highly personal perspectives, mentioning features or attributes which we can't find from the official or standard sources, or they can refer to aspects of a community which simply aren't recorded elsewhere.

When the intrepid lady traveller Celia Fiennes came to Wigan ('another pretty market town built of stone and brick') in 1698 she rode from Liverpool via Prescott, where she noted that the town had 'broad streetes well pitch'd' (that is, properly paved with stones which were slightly angled so that they provided a grip for horses). We would not discover that small but significant detail from any other source. Celia headed then to Wigan, probably past St Helens (then little more than a wayside chapel) and Billinge Hill. Her eventual destination was Preston, so why did she not take the direct road, through Ormskirk, Burscough and Rufford, following roughly the line of the modern A59?

In another of those glimpses into an otherwise unrecorded world, she tells us that she was afraid to go that way because it passed close to 'the famous Mer call'd Martin Mer'. The great lake stretched across from Rufford to the edge of what is now Southport, and was notoriously hazardous: 'as the proverb sayes [it] has parted many a man and his mare'. She would have had to ride along the boggy and treacherous shore, in the near darkness. Wise travellers took a guide, but there was none to be had, so Celia took the Wigan road. Ever observant of what was new and innovative, she noted that the draining of the mere was getting under way, and that it might soon be useful dry land.

Going through Wigan gave Celia an opportunity to visit a tourist attraction – the celebrated Burning Well, a couple of miles south of the town beside the Warrington road. She notes that she made a detour: it was 'some of my way back againe but for the Curiosity's sake I did'. The 'well' was a muddy hole in a bank in which water apparently bubbled up as though it was boiling, though Celia tried it with her hand and found that it was cold. The 'custodian' of the well then took a candle and seemed to set the water on fire, burning with a blueish flame which she describes as 'like brandy'. This extraordinary phenomenon was not unique – there were a couple of other 'burning wells' in the area - but to contemporaries it was inexplicable. The perceptive Celia observed that when they dug around and opened up the hole a little, the flame burned 'fiercer and more'.

A more scientific age knew that the spectacle was caused by a continuous natural escape of large quantities of methane from the coal seams just below the surface. The gas bubbled up through the water, and of course was highly flammable. Celia's detailed description is, I think, the earliest and most informative that we have – an eyewitness account written 325 years ago, recording a feature which has long since disappeared. The massive expansion of coal-mining in the area after 1750 disrupted the strata which were giving off the methane, and a hundred years after Celia's visit

the gas (the fearsome firedamp) had ceased to be a curiosity for visitors and was instead costing a growing toll of human lives.

She headed north into Cumbria, giving us the earliest description of Preston (very complimentary, with more well pitch'd streets) and of Lancaster (less flattering – 'old and much decay'd'). And more detailed accounts of phenomena that are otherwise unrecorded, such as the making of clapbread or oatcakes. This was entirely new to her, and the place which had the honour of making the introduction was Garstang. However, the local oatcakes did not impress her as much as those she ate near Windermere. She specifically states that she saved her full description for the latter place in her fair copy journal, and indeed she does – there's a splendid account of how they were made, clearly based on careful personal observation of the process. It has a rare historical value, and for this and much else we should sincerely thank the memory of that remarkable woman.

**Alan Crosby**

## NEWS FROM ARCHIVES

### LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES & LOCAL HISTORY

#### LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATION – ARCHIVES

The third edition of our Lancashire local history magazine, *Archives*, is available to purchase from all Lancashire County Council libraries and at Lancashire Archives, priced at £3. If you'd like to receive a copy by post, please contact the Archives at [archives@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@lancashire.gov.uk)

If you have an idea you'd like to discuss, please contact us at [archives@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@lancashire.gov.uk) and we'd be pleased to discuss your suggestion.

The deadline for submission of articles for the fourth edition is 1 March 2024.

You can find out more about how to submit an article by visiting our website at: [Ordering copies and publications - Lancashire County Council](#)



### NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVES

Our monthly digest of updates and news from Lancashire Archives & Local History has had a refresh and is now available as a direct web-link as well as in PDF format,

depending on how you like to take your archives news. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact us at [archives@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:archives@lancashire.gov.uk).

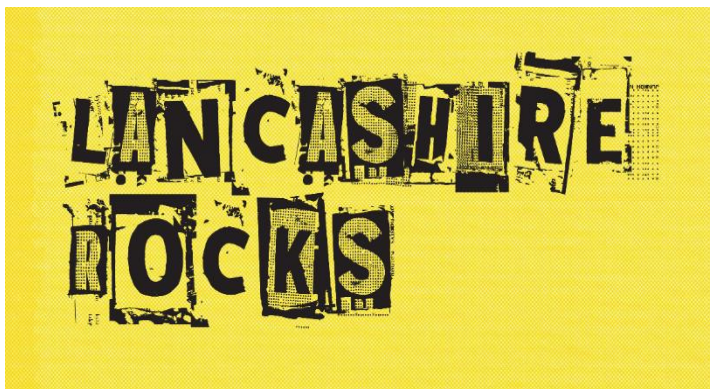


### WE ARE ON FACEBOOK!

Please have a look and follow us at: <https://www.facebook.com/lancsarchives>

You can also follow us on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/LancsArchives>

### LOCAL HISTORY EXHIBITION AT CHORLEY LIBRARY – *LANCASHIRE ROCKS*



Local family man John Winstanley was fortunate enough to witness music and youth culture during the noughties in Chorley. John and Lancashire Archives & Local History have co-curated a new display at Chorley Library Local History entitled, *Lancashire Rocks: Chorley Music and Youth Culture in the Noughties*.

The exhibition runs from 27 January 2024.

Chorley Local History is open at Chorley Library at the following times: Tuesday, 9.15-12.00, 2.00-5.00, Thursday, 9.15-12.00, 2.00-5.00, and Saturday 2.00-5.00.

### EVENTS AT LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES & LOCAL HISTORY

#### LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH

We will be hosting two events for **LGBTQ+ History Month 2024** – keep an eye on our website or contact us for more details:

**Wednesday 21 February 6:00-7:30pm:** A display of recently acquired costume collections from local designer Ross Griffiths. Hosted in partnership with the Harris Museum



**Saturday 24 February 11:00am-3:00pm:** The launch of a new zine, *None of Your Business*, with banner-making activities and talks on the origins of the Navajo Chartermark, the LGBTQ+ Chartermark for public services which was founded in Lancashire

## CHINESE NEW YEAR



**Sunday 11 February:** Join us to celebrate Chinese New Year, in collaboration with the UCLAN Confucius Institute, for Chinese calligraphy, a tea tasting ceremony, free dragon- and lantern-making workshops, and a chance to take part in a dragon dance!

Free event, suitable for all the family!

## CHESHIRE ARCHIVES

The National Lottery Heritage Fund has provided further funding to contribute towards the delivery of two new facilities in Chester and Crewe, which will replace the Cheshire Record Office in Chester.

The Crewe facility will be the first time the south of the county has had a dedicated history centre. The other will be a short distance from the current site, in the Chester suburb of Hoole.



The new facilities will enable the service to:

- better preserve and share Cheshire's nationally-significant archives and local studies collections
- significantly expand learning and outreach programmes, to engage a much larger and wider range of people with archives



- improve the research facilities and the working environment for the team and volunteers

Some services will be unavailable until completion of the project in 2025 – details on the website [www.cheshirearchives.gov.uk](http://www.cheshirearchives.gov.uk).

The website hosts a blog: **Historical thinking: using the census in primary teacher education**. It is based on an article, written by **Tony Pickford**, Visiting Lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Chester, about using the census in primary education. <http://tinyurl.com/3ht85yby> Many more blogs can also be accessed online.

One of the online resources is **Cheshire tithe maps**. It is fully searchable, and also allows the current map to be shown alongside the tithe map, with a toggle to slide between the two.

## SPEAKERS' CORNER

We invite speakers to contact the newsletter to publicise their talks to 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.

Contact Marianne Howell, Newsletter editor [mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk)

## PAUL GASKELL

**Contact details:** [paulgask@googlemail.com](mailto:paulgask@googlemail.com) or 07720 433163. Please e-mail unless the contact is urgent.

**Subject(s):**

- Research at home using your local libraries' online resources
- Published sources for family and local history

**Areas where you are willing to travel and whether you would deliver over Zoom, if asked** I am a Lancastrian living in exile in Oxfordshire. Hence, I am unable to deliver talks in person, but my talks are optimised for delivery using Zoom or other online delivery platforms such as Microsoft Teams.

**Any other relevant information:** A brief synopsis of each talk can be supplied to any interested societies upon request. I am also likely to be able to talk on a midweek evening at a few days' notice.

**MEGAN ROBERTS**

**Contact details:** [meganroberts.bc@googlemail.com](mailto:meganroberts.bc@googlemail.com) or 07702 093714

**Subjects:** Early 19<sup>th</sup> century crime with a particular focus on transportation, and the stories of individual convicts, including those convicted by the Lancashire courts.

**Areas where you are willing to travel:** Based in Chorley, but happy to travel anywhere in Lancashire. Zoom meetings are also accommodated.

**Any other relevant information:** Megan Roberts is the author of two books on transportation: *Transported*, and *The Wretched Women*. She is a regular speaker at family history events. Within the broad theme above, she delivers different talks, tailored to her audience.

**RUSSELL PARRY**

**Contact details:** [rparry1961@gmail.com](mailto:rparry1961@gmail.com) or 07973 452889

**Subject:** The Appley Bridge meteorite anniversary.

**Areas where you are willing to travel:** Most of the county – evenings only. Also available over Zoom.

**Any other relevant information:** 2024 marks the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Appley Bridge meteorite, which at the time was the second largest ever to hit the UK. Appley Bridge, Wigan, Preston and the city of Manchester all feature in the fascinating story.

The presentation includes the opportunity to handle and photograph various meteorites.

This story has taken me on quite a journey in the past 10 years since the publication of my book *The Appley Bridge meteorite*, from talks on cruise ships to the American

Museum of Natural History in New York City; and last year my radio dramatisation of the story was aired on the BBC.

## NEWS FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES

### BARNOLDSWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

We are pleased to have recently joined the Federation, and look forward to meeting and working with like-minded people from across the north west.

Meetings are held at 7.30pm on the last Thursday of the month in the OAP Centre, Frank Street, Barnoldswick BB18 5AE.

**29 February: *When the tumult of war is a distant echo*, an illustrated talk by Denise North**

**28 March: *An introduction into the world of Brass Bands*, an illustrated talk by Chris Helm**



This year will mark the 50th anniversary of our move from the West Riding of Yorkshire into Lancashire. A journalist from a well-known Yorkshire magazine will be quizzing members about how successful they feel the move has been. We expect some strong opinions!

Our photograph of the month is of Edith Nutter's Ladies and Children's Outfitters in Rainhall Road in Barnoldswick and shows her entry in a window-dressing competition from 1936.

For further details contact: Alan Roberts  
[alanrobertsbarnoldswick@gmail.com](mailto:alanrobertsbarnoldswick@gmail.com)

[We welcome Barnoldswick History Society as a new member of the Federation, joining 80 other groups. If you are a member of a society within the county palatine which does not yet belong to the Federation, why not suggest that they join? It costs only £8 per year – full details on the website [www.lancashirehistory.org](http://www.lancashirehistory.org) – Ed.]

### BURNLEY AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Wednesday 14 February 2.00pm: *Midwifery through the Ages* with Linda Sawley**

**Wednesday 13 March 2.00pm: *Women into Medicine* with Denise North**



**Wednesday 10 April 2.00pm: *Royal Romp – a thousand years of royal gossip* with Graham Kemp**

Meetings are held at St. John's RC Church Hall, Ivy Street, Burnley BB10 1TB. Guests are always welcome - £2.00 per meeting.

## **FRIENDS OF PENDLE HERITAGE**

Meetings are held at Higherford Methodist Church, 5 Bankfield Street, Barrowford BB8 9NY. Entrance at the back with free parking. Visitors £5. Refreshments £1.

**Tuesday 13 February 2.00pm: Peter Anthony will speak on the restoration of Lytham Hall.** He will take us on the journey of restoring this wonderful Grade I listed building to its present status as one of the finest Georgian houses in the north west and winner of the Historic Houses Restoration Award in 2022.

**Thursday 14 March 7.30pm: Malkin Morris Dancers.** They will give us a brief history of local dancing, music and kit presentation. Last year, we bought new sticks for the dancers as part of our support for Pendle heritage.

**Tuesday 9 April 2.00pm: Memories are made of this.** Andrea Smith invites members to bring along small items/token/pictures and talk about the memories they hold.

## **LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY**

**Wednesday 21 February 6.30pm via Zoom: Morris Garratt Memorial Lecture: *A True Lanky: the Life and Circles of William Edward Armytage Axon (1846-1913)* with Lucy Evans.** Lucy has written a biography of W E A Axon, drawing on research into his prolific body of work as a writer and social reformer. He came from a difficult background before being adopted by the Axons. He was self-taught, but became an important figure in the history of the Antiquarian Society, a librarian at Manchester Central Library and a journalist for the *Manchester Guardian*.

**Wednesday 6 March 7.00pm: Zoom talk: *History of Cheshire Life and Lancashire Life*, with Andrew Hobbs.** These two familiar magazines began in the 1930s (for *Cheshire Life*) and 1940s (*Lancashire Life*) and attracted a massive readership. They tell us a lot about county identities, social class, people's sense of place and attitudes to the countryside, whilst giving us a picture of the changing nature of the "county set".

**Wednesday 3 April 7.00pm: Zoom talk: *The Great Miss Lydia Becker: Suffragist, Scientist and Trailblazer*, with Joanna Williams.** Lydia Becker was brought up near Manchester in a middle-class family. She broke away from convention, remaining single and entering the sphere of men by engaging in politics. Lydia addressed innumerable audiences, not only on votes for women, but also on the position of wives, the abuse of women, and their rights at work. She battled grittily to gain academic education for poor girls, and kept countless supporters, in Britain and beyond, abreast of the many campaigns for women's rights through her

publication, *The Women's Suffrage Journal*. As chief lobbyist for women, she influenced MPs in a way that no woman, and few men, had done before. In the 1860s the idea of women's suffrage was dismissed as ridiculous and unnatural. By the time of her death in 1890 there was wide acceptance that the enfranchisement of women had to happen.

Please email [secretary@landcas.org.uk](mailto:secretary@landcas.org.uk) for a link to any of these talks, or for more information.

### **Applications invited for a research grant**

Following on from our 140<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year we are offering a grant for a research project related to the historic counties of Lancashire and Cheshire, including Greater Manchester and Merseyside. The research should come under one of the following headings:

- archaeology
- local history
- architectural study
- folklore
- economic or social history
- industrial archaeology/history

The grant is open to everyone and presents the opportunity to have work published in the next edition of the Transactions. All applications will be judged by a group of our council members and the results given by the end of April 2024.

If you are interested in applying for this grant please make contact via [secretary@landcas.org.uk](mailto:secretary@landcas.org.uk) or on Facebook to request a copy of the rules and an application form. **The closing date for applications is 8 April.**

## **LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY AND HERALDRY SOCIETY**

Noted from the website:

**Find My Past** <https://www.findmypast.co.uk> has recently added the following records:

- Barrow-in-Furness shipbuilding and engineering employees. It contains over 96,000 records, including name, date of birth, department, address and duration of employment. More than 1,300 records relating to women employees in WWI are included.
- UK commemorative plaques – nearly 13,000 entries.
- In July 2023, an additional 112,000 pages were added to the newspaper section.

**British Newspaper Archives** <https://www.britishnewspaperarchives.co.uk> has added the Skelmersdale Reporter.

See both websites for subscription details.

## LIVERPOOL & S W LANCASHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

**Tuesday 20 February 7.30pm: *Leigh between the wars* with Michael Caine**  
Derby Room, Leigh Library, Civic Square, WN7 1EB

**Tuesday 5 March 7.30pm: *Home children sent to Canada* with Ian Monney**  
Upholland Methodist Church, Alma Hill, WN8 0NR

**Tuesday 19 March 7.30pm: *The Manchester Martyrs* with Joe O' Neill**  
Leigh Library (as above)

**Tuesday 2 April 7.30pm: *The Halsall Murder* with Dot Broady-Hawkes**  
Upholland Methodist Church (as above)

**Tuesday 16 April 7.30pm: *Leigh women who lived as men* with Bryan Joyce**  
Leigh Library (as above)

## RECORD SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE

**Wednesday 27 March 1.45pm: Annual General Meeting.** Liverpool Central Library, William Brown Street, L3 8EW (Meeting rooms 1 & 2)

**2.00pm: Colin Phillips Memorial Lecture: *Robin Hood in the Medieval and Early Modern north west*. Martin Heale**, Professor of Late Medieval and Reformation History at the University of Liverpool, is President of the society.

All are welcome in person, but the event will also be livestreamed on Zoom. Contact Diana Dunn [d.dunn@chester.ac.uk](mailto:d.dunn@chester.ac.uk) to register and to indicate whether you wish to attend in person or online.

## REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE

**Saturday 10 February: Medieval towns and town life in north west England – A full study day with Dr Alan Crosby** Alan will build on his previous exploration of this topic, using further research to bring details to life.

As this is entirely in person it will be very popular, so prior booking is essential.

**Saturday 2 March: 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Archaeology forum.** Topics will include:

- Recent Roman finds in Carlisle
- Investigations at medieval Lowther Castle and village
- The workings of the database of the Portable Antiquities Scheme
- A Q&A session to round off proceedings

This in-person event will also be live-streamed.

Booking details at [Regional Heritage Centre - Lancaster University](#).

**The RHC December Local History Fair ended 2023 on a high note** In 2023, the Regional Heritage Centre, part of the History Department at Lancaster University, celebrated an impressive milestone: 50 years since the foundation of its predecessor organisation, the Centre for North West Regional Studies, which eventually evolved into the RHC. Throughout the year, special events were held monthly, but the RHC's very first - and very successful - local history fair in December certainly ended the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year on a high note.

Fifteen local history and heritage organisations from all over the north west joined us at the Friends' Meeting House in Lancaster on Saturday 2 December to meet the public, talk about valuable community work and projects and enjoy a series of free talks from RHC Co-Director Dr Chris Donaldson, Dr Jean Turnbull (Lancaster University) and Dr Sarah Rose of the Victoria County History of Cumbria project.

Throughout the day, the hall was bustling with an estimated 150 visitors who were buying books, chatting with stallholders, perusing the exhibition banners, and networking with fellow enthusiasts. The hot drinks, soup and cake available to purchase proved very popular as people took time to catch up with old friends and make some new ones. The buzz of conversation at times threatened to overpower our speakers, but luckily a portable voice amplifier averted that danger. And that wasn't the only hi-tech highlight...

*RHC Co-Director Dr Chris Donaldson and Claire Bradshaw of the Morecambe Bay Partnership.*

Chris was bowled over by the virtual reality experience on offer at the Morecambe Bay Partnership's stand. He was only one of many to take advantage of a 'tour' of the WWII-era dock defences of Barrow's Walney Island. Other highlights included a show-and-tell table of archaeological finds from the Lancaster & District Heritage Group and some very snazzy giveaway pencils from Lancashire Archives, amongst many other interesting offerings.



It was a fabulous day despite the icy weather, and a great way to say thank you to all of those who support our work, year in and year out. We saw many Friends and Patrons of the Centre, some of whom braved snow on the roads or problems with train travel to be there - and more than one member of the public asked if this was to become a recurring event. Based on the overwhelmingly positive feedback from stall holders, we certainly hope so. In fact, after the fair wound down and the last table was packed away, a working group of stallholders and RHC staff repaired to the local pub to begin sorting out the details... It just goes to show what an appetite there is to learn more about the history and heritage of the north west. Our thanks to everyone who demonstrated their commitment to this shared passion – we couldn't be in better company!

## SKELMERSDALE HERITAGE SOCIETY

Meetings are held at 7.00pm on Mondays at Upholland Labour Club, Ormskirk Road, Skelmersdale WN8 8AR. Visitors £2 per session.

**5 February: *Women in World War I*, with Graham Stirrup**

**4 March: *Place-names & the landscape in Medieval Lancashire*, with Dr Alan Crosby**

**8 April: *The man who shod the war horses at Lathom House*, with Martin Jones**

## TAMESIDE LOCAL HISTORY FORUM

The following talks take place at the Tameside Local Studies and Archives Centre, Cotton St East, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 7BY. All are welcome to attend these events: please ring 06161 342 4242 or email [archives@tameside.gov.uk](mailto:archives@tameside.gov.uk) to book.

**Tuesday 27 February 2.00pm: Frank Pleszak will talk about the Siberian Gulag.** This is based on the life of his father who was forcibly removed from his home in Poland by the Russian secret police. Frank has researched his father's ordeals in the gulag and during the war, and has written a book entitled *Two Years in a Gulag*.

**Tuesday 26 March 2.00pm: Jackie Tucker will talk about the Gaskell family, their home and garden.** Jackie is a volunteer at the Gaskell House in Plymouth Grove, Manchester, with special responsibility for the garden. The house was on the edge of the countryside when the Gaskells moved there in 1850 and the garden was important to Elizabeth Gaskell. Present day gardeners are attempting to reproduce the style she would have recognised.

**Tuesday 9 April 2.00pm: Norman Redhead will talk about archaeological investigations in and around Manchester Cathedral.** Norman is the former County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester. The opportunity arose in 2013 to excavate at the Cathedral and learn more about its structure and burials there.

**The History on Your Doorstep** research group meet every Thursday afternoon in the Centre from 1.00 to 3.00pm. New members are always welcome. No research experience is necessary to join this friendly group!

**Saturday 13 April 10.00am-4.00pm: Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society fair** at Manchester Central Library, St Peter's Square, M2 5PD. The forum will be represented - please call in and have a chat!

## WARRINGTON LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

**Monday 5 February 7.30pm: *The Italian Renaissance in the English imagination*, with Stella Fletcher** Dr Fletcher is a specialist in Italian cultural



history during the Renaissance. Dr Fletcher will look at how the Renaissance has shaped the English outlook on the world.

**Monday 4 March 7.30pm: *Climate crisis, with Floris van den Berg*** Dr van den Berg is a Dutch scholar at the University of Utrecht. His specialism is climate change and how humans can actively respond, in order to repair the damage done and build a better future.

**Monday 1 April 7.30pm: *President's address by Pat Barlow*** [subject to be confirmed]

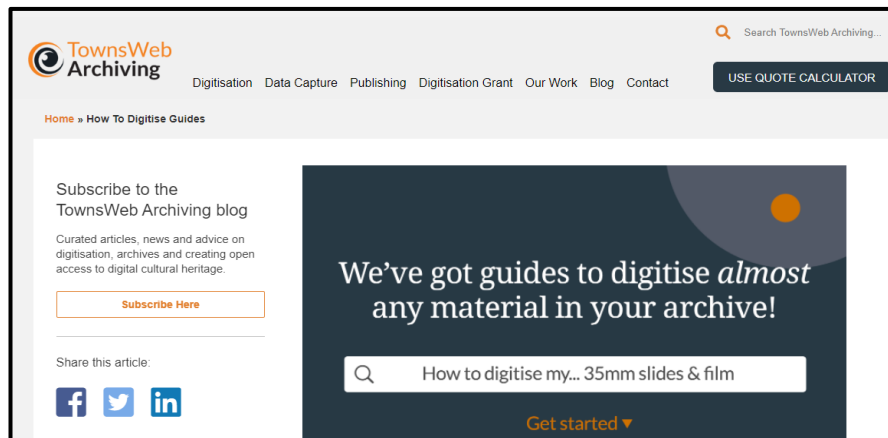
Events take place at Friar's Green Independent Methodist church hall, Cairo Street, Warrington WA1 1EH. Guests always welcome - £4 payable at the door. For more details please check the website: [www.warringtonlitandphil.org.uk](http://www.warringtonlitandphil.org.uk)

## NEWS ROUNDUP

### COMMUNITY ARCHIVES AND HERITAGE GROUP

The group's newsletter contains a link to guides provided by Townsweb Archiving: **'How to digitise' guides: a collection of guides for (almost) every material.**

Working with some of the country's rarest archives has given Townsweb Archiving an opportunity to form a specialised team and a series of tried and tested workflows.



Acknowledging that not everybody who wishes to digitise will do so through a specialist provider, they decided to share these workflows, in a series of published guides. To access the guides, sign up to receive the CAHG newsletter <https://www.communityarchives.org.uk/>

## HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

A roundup of meetings held by branches of the Association. Visitors welcome.

**BOLTON BRANCH:** Leverhulme Suite, Bolton School Girls' Division, Chorley New Road, BL1 4PA (Free parking on site). Visitors £5.

**Monday 5 February 6.30pm: Artful dodgers and youth justice in Victorian Britain, by Professor Heather Shore, Manchester Metropolitan University.**

For more details see [www.boltonhistoricalassociation.wordpress.com](http://www.boltonhistoricalassociation.wordpress.com)

**MANCHESTER BRANCH:** Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, M2 5NS.  
Visitors £3.

**Saturday 17 February 12.00pm: Roads to Rome: two thousand years of travel along the routes of empire, with Professor Catherine Fletcher, Manchester Metropolitan University**

**Saturday 16 March 12.00pm: Manchester, the slave trade and slavery c1750-1833, with Professor Alan Kidd, Manchester Metropolitan University**

For further details of Manchester branch meetings, contact Sahand Razavi  
[srazavi@live.co.uk](mailto:srazavi@live.co.uk)



This project is a joint initiative between the University of Portsmouth, the National Railway Museum and the Modern

Records Centre at the University of Warwick. The aim is to research railway worker accidents in Britain and Ireland from the late 1880s to 1939. The extensive database is freely available on the website, and with the help of volunteers it is hoped to add 50,000 additional cases. They welcome contributions from the wider community.

The project leaders believe that the information will be useful for railway enthusiasts, family historians, academics, those in the current railway industry, museums and archives professionals and more, especially as there is so much detail in the records.

For more information download an information sheet from the website  
[www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk](http://www.railwayaccidents.port.ac.uk).

## **MANCHESTER HISTORIES**

**Monday 4 March: Creative Café at Manchester Central Library M2 5PD**

Manchester Histories are keen to support people's well-being by engaging them with heritage and history. How can Manchester Histories develop plans, both in the [Manchester Histories Hub](#) in Manchester Central Library and by facilitators in the wider community, like care homes?



**Dr Erin Beeston**, Knowledge Exchange Research Fellow, is devising ways to make the most of the film, sound, image and documentary resources in the Archives+ collections in the library. To find out more or to help in developing the resource, come along to the Creative Café. Email [Erin@manchesterhistories.co.uk](mailto:Erin@manchesterhistories.co.uk) for more information.

**Manchester Histories hosts blogs** on various topics. Two examples follow:

***Linked by wheels and tracks!* by Xinran Meng.** The blog explores the history and collections of the Museum of Transport (Boyle Street, Cheetham M8 8UW).

***‘You were never out of a job in Oldham’: how deindustrialisation affected northern towns,*** by Hannah Popplewell

## LANDMARK TRUST



The Landmark Trust was founded in 1965 as a building conservation charity. It is possible to stay on a self-catering basis in any one of their 200 buildings.

In Lancashire, they care for The Music Room in Lancaster. It was built of three storeys in about 1730 as the garden pavilion of 76 Church Street. Pevsner states:

*The main room inside was on the first floor – was, because it is now so decayed that there can be no hope of saving it. It is a disgrace for a town like Lancaster. Where were the*

*successors of the Williamsons and Storeys when it came to preserving the finest interior in the town?....It is no good saying more. In a few more years it will all have disappeared. [The buildings of England: Lancashire: 2 – the rural north; Penguin, 1969, p.160] [Image: Humphrey Bolton - Wikimedia Commons]*

It is fortunate that the building did not meet the fate which Pevsner foresaw, and that it is possible to pay to stay there. [www.landmarktrust.org.uk](http://www.landmarktrust.org.uk).

**HISTORIC ENGLAND** Among the sites and buildings newly listed by Historic England are three, designated Grade II, in Lancashire.

**St Nicholas Church, Fleetwood FY7 7DJ.**

**List entry no. 1487414.** The 1960s church was designed by Lawrence King, one of the leading post-war ecclesiastical architects. The dedication to St Nicholas, the patron saint of sailors, was chosen to emphasise Fleetwood's strong maritime connections. The theme is further reflected in its shape – an upturned boat - and other, internal features. [Steve2022 – Wikimedia Commons]



**Former Liverpool Furnishing Company showroom, Liverpool L3 5JY. List entry no. 1483050.** The 1899 building, by W Hesketh & Co., was purpose built for the company. It has an Edwardian Baroque terracotta and stone exterior, and a clock tower. It is a good representative example of late 19<sup>th</sup> century commercial buildings.



**Deep Pit railway footbridge in Hindley, Wigan WN2 2QP. List entry no. 1487166.**

The bridge dates from 1887. It was probably designed by Augustus Topp, the railway company's resident engineer, and was made by Walker Brothers (see below). It serves a footpath which used to connect two local collieries, Deep Pit and Ladies Lane *[The editor – who braved deep mud to take the photo!]*

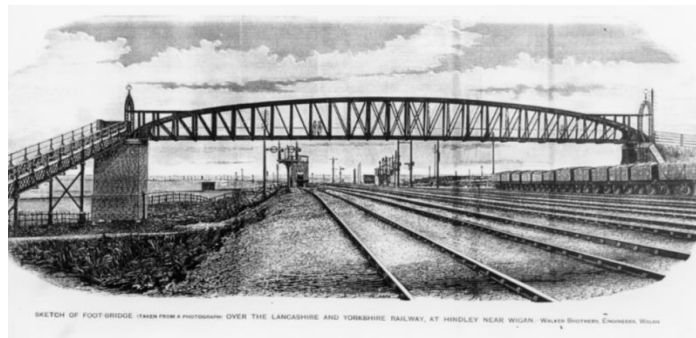
The listing of the 40m bridge includes its brick piers, the northern setted access path and the southern access ramp. It has been listed because:

- It is an unusually long single-span wrought-iron railway footbridge
- It has an elegant basket-arched form of bowstring trusses
- It has survived with very little alteration

[Historic England - Championing England's heritage | Historic England](#)

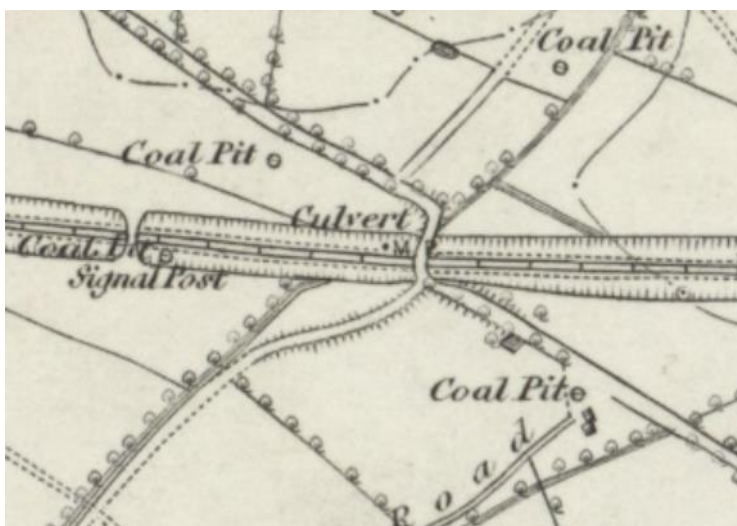
**Marianne Howell adds the following information about the bridge builders.** In the industrial past it was not unusual to have major engineering projects carried out by local companies.

Walker Brothers was founded in 1866 and moved to its Pagefield works in the 1870s. It was one of the most important companies of any description in the Wigan area. It manufactured ventilating and winding engines for mines (including the fans for the Severn Tunnel, and the Mersey and Glasgow Central railways), Pagefield commercial vehicles, and many other products.



The illustration above was produced by Walker Brothers. The company's works adjoined the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway line, so the components of the bridge will have been transported from the works to the erection site entirely by rail.





The bridge eventually spanned 9 tracks including a siding from Ladies Lane Colliery to the south. Hindley Deep Pits to the north closed in 1891 and Ladies Lane in 1908. The fact that signalling equipment remained on the bridge until 1972 may explain why it survived long after the collieries were closed.

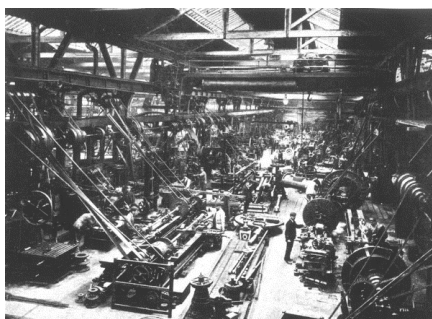
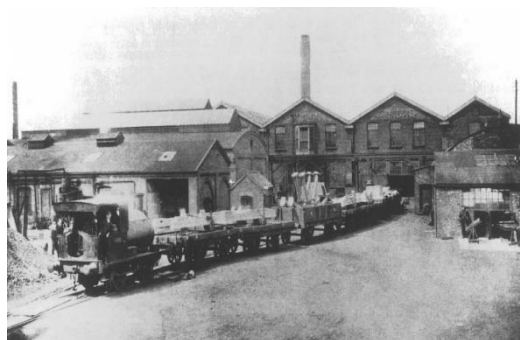
[OS 6-inch Lancashire Sheet XCIV, 1849]

Loco *Harry* at the works. The site adjoined the main line, with spurs into the site.

For more information about Walkers

[Walker Bros & Pagefield Ironworks - Wigan Local History & Heritage Society](#)

[Archives: Wigan & Leigh PC2015.13023, J A Podgen Collection]



This illustration from the catalogue shows a vast area, which it states is one of 6 bays of the Erecting Shop.

[Archives: Wigan & Leigh PC201620B]

A catalogue from c. 1900 states:

*The Pagefield Ironworks are situated in the centre of the South Lancashire Coal and Iron districts.*

*The Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway adjoins the Works on the North side, and is connected with them by means of sidings; the Leeds and Liverpool Canal forms the boundary on the South side, so that direct railway and water communication are afforded for the delivery of raw materials, and the despatch of finished machinery and ironwork. [The Authentic map directory of South Lancashire, Ed. James Bain [n.d.]*

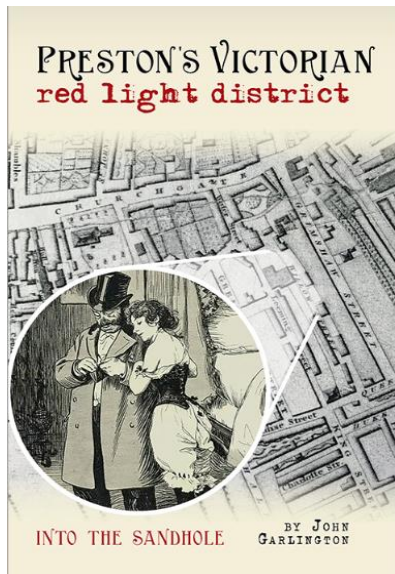




*The site of the Works occupies an area of about eight acres. The chief productions are machinery required at Collieries, Metalliferous Mines, Chemical and Ironworks.*

The line between Manchester and Bolton is being electrified. The road bridge at Hindley station, several hundred yards away, has already been raised. At some point the Deep Pit bridge will also have to be tackled. It will be interesting to see how this will be carried out, bearing in mind that the bridge is now Grade II listed.

## PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



### PRESTON'S VICTORIAN RED LIGHT DISTRICT: INTO THE SANDHOLE

By John Garlington

ISBN 978-1-910837-47-4 Palatine Books by Carnegie Publishing Ltd [www.carnegiepublishing.com](http://www.carnegiepublishing.com)

Price £9.99.

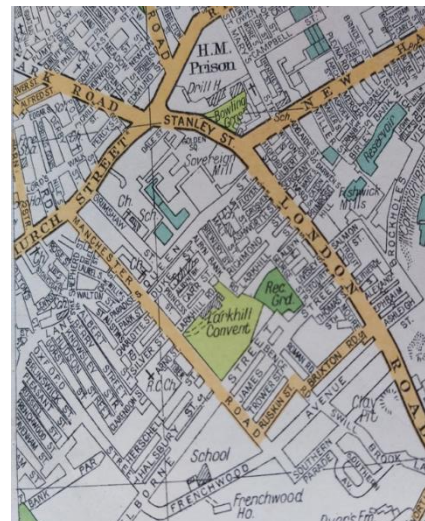
#### Review by Stephen Benson

Prior to reading this book I had never heard of “The Sandhole” although I have spent much of my life living and working in Preston and its surroundings.

“The Sandhole” covers the present area from the parish church in Church Street, up to and along Manchester Road as far as Queen Street and the FCJ Convent at Lark Hill, then across to St Augustine’s RC Church, down St Austins Place and along Vauxhall Road to where it ran into Avenham Lane.

The account begins in the 1830s and leads us into the reasons why the area forming the Sandhole became impoverished, starting with the increasing mechanisation of cotton manufacturing which led to the economic ruin of handloom weavers and their families who had worked in the damp but well-lit cellars of many houses in the area.

This led to these cellar properties becoming occupied by families who spent all their lives in a damp unsanitary environment with no safe drinking water supply available. Families were large and had no support mechanism to cover sickness and unemployment. Properties were built to a high density with poor or no drainage, and outdoor “privies”. In addition, the local area was exposed to run off from urine and



[The Authentic map directory of South Lancashire, Ed. James Bain [n.d.]]

excrement from horses (which formed the main haulage power and transport), cattle kept for their milk, and pigs. These all produced manure which created a stench, attracted flies and exposed people to a range of airborne and other contagious diseases. John Garlington cites earlier research by Nigel Morgan, who wrote *Deadly Dwellings*, and contemporaneous articles in the four local newspapers.

While local officials generally ignored the debauchery and barbarism in the area, the police concentrated on prosecuting theft, drunkenness, prostitution and assault caused by the presence of the brothels.

Occasional reports were made of the serious level of misbehaviour, and local clergy were encouraged to help these desperate people and their victims. Education was preached as the solution, to help the impoverished to move up the social ladder and away from the influence of drunkenness, licentiousness and poverty. It took many years before effective action was taken by the local churches and their congregations to help improve the area their parishes bounded.

This is a well-researched book that paints a vivid picture, during the industrial revolution and up to the Victorian era, of an area close to the centre of Preston that was for so long the stinking underbelly and a major blemish on the town's reputation. The history of the area has been glossed over by historians for many years and it is almost by accident that John Garlington has re-discovered this area and brought it back to our notice. My childhood memories of the area will never be the same again.

## REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

### WYRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

One of the current group projects is the investigation of some warehouses at Wardleys in Stalmine-with-Staynall.

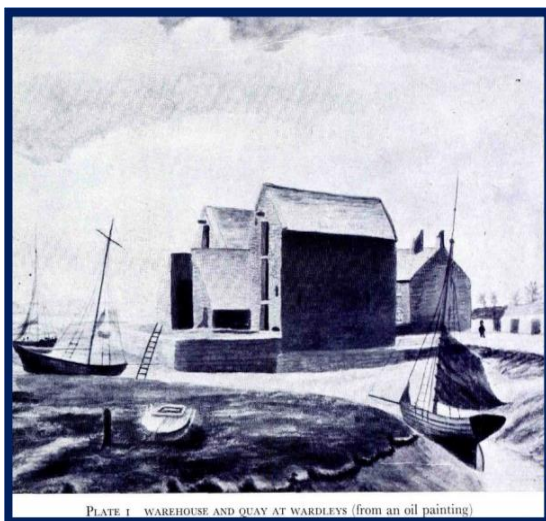


PLATE I. WAREHOUSE AND QUAY AT WARDLEYS (from an oil painting)

The first warehouse was built c. 1750 as part of a harbour on Wardleys Creek. Together with another nearby harbour at Skippool they formed the main parts of the port of Poulton. Merchants used the port for trade in a great variety of goods. They traded with the southern states of the fledgling USA, the Caribbean, India, Africa, Russia and the Baltic ports, and Western Europe, and there was also coastal trading with Scotland, Wales, the Isle of Man and Ireland. The increased importation of flax, in particular, changed its working from a cottage industry to bulk production.

Excavations on the site began in May 2022, and have uncovered the remains of (at least) two buildings, each of which may have been modified over time.

The picture (above) is a photograph of an oil painting of one of the warehouses. It is not known when it was painted, but finding out the date may help to determine the order in which the buildings were constructed.

**If you can shed any light on this image, if you know where the original is, or you have any further information about the harbour and the port, please contact David Hampson [secwya@gmail.com](mailto:secwya@gmail.com)**

### **SAVE THE DATE!**

**Saturday 13 July: Chorley Heritage Centre Support Group is hosting an 'At Home', supported by the Federation.**

The two talks in the morning will reveal fascinating facts about mining in the Chorley area, and about Myles Standish – a Mayflower Pilgrim and one of the founders of the Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts in 1620. After lunch there will be an opportunity to join one of three guided tours.

This is sure to be an interesting day. More information and booking details to follow later in the year.

**We invite readers to submit articles for possible inclusion in the quarterly newsletter. They can be about any aspect of local history, or interesting family history research. If you are considering submitting an article please email the editor, who will send a copy of the guidelines.**

**[mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mariannerh@hotmail.co.uk)**

**COPY DATE FOR NEXT EDITION:  
22 APRIL 2024**