



LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY FEDERATION

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FEDERATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday 17 March 7:00 pm: Brief AGM will be held over **Zoom**

Followed by a talk: *Two medieval battles in the Ribble Valley*, by Professor Fiona Edmunds. The battles concerned are Whalley in 798 and Clitheroe in 1138. The two battles are little known now, but were very important at the time.

Fiona Edmunds, the Professor of Regional History at Lancaster University, is a medieval historian and Director of the Regional Heritage Centre.

Zoë Lawson, the membership secretary, will be sending out papers in advance.

SAVE THE DAY!

This year's At Home on Saturday 4 July will be hosted in the Harris Museum in Preston, by Preston Historical Society and The Friends of Winckley Square. The exciting programme of talks and activities will be available later.

VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

We are now entering a period in which the historians of Lancashire will be celebrating a series of important bicentenaries related to the early development of our railway network. The most obvious one is the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, which was opened in September 1830 and was authorised by an act of Parliament passed at the beginning of May 1826, almost exactly 200 years ago. The Liverpool and Manchester was not the first railway in the county - there had been colliery tramroads and wagonways for many decades, since at least the beginning of the 18th century, and at the end of that century some of them were being developed further. Robert Daglish built a colliery railway at Orrell, near Wigan, which opened in 1812. It used steam power via a unique cog and rack system, with a locomotive known as the 'Walking Horse', which Daglish built at the Haigh Foundry in Wigan. There was already a longer railway than that - the 5-mile tramway which linked the two halves of the Lancaster Canal, crossing the River Ribble at Preston. This was worked by horses, apart from two inclined planes operated by steam engines. It was opened in 1803 as a substitute for the awe-inspiring aqueduct which was originally planned. The tramway was supposed to be temporary but it operated for almost 70 years and long stretches of its course are still clearly visible.

In 1825, at the end of March, the Act of Parliament authorising the construction of the Bolton and Leigh Railway was passed. The line was opened in 1828 and thus it had the honour of being the first 'modern' railway in the county, albeit with rope-worked inclines as well as steam locomotives. The line was never well-known, despite its place in railway history and although it was linked to the Liverpool and Manchester at Kenyon Junction in 1831. It was the L&M which had the superlatives and the 'firsts': It was double track and steam worked throughout, it was the world's first inter-city line, it had a full regular timetable, and it was intended as much for passengers as for freight.

In 2½ years' time the celebrations will begin at Rainhill to commemorate the bicentenary of the Rainhill Trials, which were designed to test the capacity and efficiency of different types of steam locomotives (which had only been invented 25 years previously). The Trials were famously won by Stephenson's *Rocket*, proving to the world the potential of steam traction and indeed of railways themselves. The line was then approaching completion, already being noted for its superb engineering works including the long deep Olive Mount cutting between Edge Hill and Broad Green, the high embankment at Roby, the massive viaduct over the Sankey Brook, and the audacious crossing of Chat Moss.

From 1830 onwards the railway network spread very quickly across the county, reaching Preston in 1836, crossing the Pennines in 1845, and heading north of Lancaster by 1840. Lancashire, one of the birthplaces of the railway revolution, was one of the first areas of the world where railways formed a network, although the prevailing philosophy of *laissez faire* meant that there was no logical planning and no overall national scheme, leading to complications, duplications and omissions in the railway map. The effects of those problems are still with us today - the Victorian legacy was by no means an unmixed blessing. But let us celebrate what we have ... for the next thirty or forty years, local history societies up and down the county will be marking the anniversaries of their local railways. Construction of the network continued until the late 19th century, by which time Lancashire had one of the most

intricate networks in the country. When we look around our county we can see the magnificent engineering works such as the Whalley Viaduct, and we can be proud of the contribution and achievement of Lancashire and in its engineers 200 or 150 years ago.

Dr Alan Crosby

FEDERATION 'AT HOME' WITH LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES

On Saturday 15 November, more than 60 people gathered at Lancashire Archives & Local History in Preston for an 'At Home'. Each year, a member society of the Federation hosts a day to showcase their local history and the local area. This year was different, as it was held at the Archives to celebrate 85 years since the foundation of the record office, and the 50th anniversary of the opening of the present building.

There were four short and very informative talks in the morning.

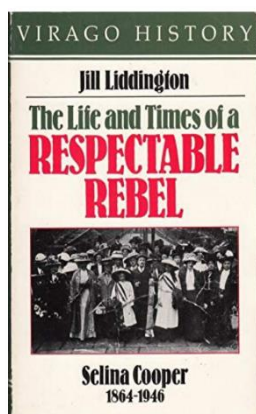
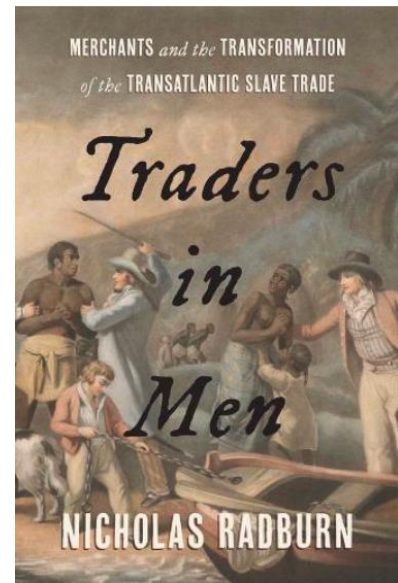
Dr Alan Crosby, the chairman of the Federation, (who really does not need any further introduction!) took as his theme *Safeguarding Lancashire Archives: a historical perspective*. In the late 16th century there was the beginning of the concept of preserving official information – current documents; those that may be needed for future reference, especially for establishing precedents; and those which could be useful for historical purposes. Gradually this became more systematic, and by the 19th century a series of buildings in Preston was used to store official papers, such as Quarter Sessions records. In March 1940 the record office was officially formed, and Reginald Sharpe France was appointed to lead the new organisation. Its first home was in County Hall, then it moved to the Old Sessions House. Finally, in 1975, the present, purpose-built Archives premises were opened to house 900 years of the county's history.



Dr Jack Southern (University of Lancashire) spoke about *Organisational history as social history: inside the Amalgamated Weavers' Association*. He set the scene by outlining the complexity of the cotton industry in the county. In effect it was a series of inter-connected industries, which varied from place to place. It also underpinned many other industries, and contributed enormously to the wealth of Britain – 'Britain's bread hangs by Lancashire's thread'. It was the first industry to de-industrialise, and its growth and decline mirrored that of the British Empire.

The huge deposit of material from the Association in the Archives includes living and working conditions, health and wellbeing, disputes, international contacts, and details from the 34 branches. The collection [*Catalogue reference DDX1123*] can also shed light on numerous aspects of society, such as religion, politics and the role of women.

Dr Nicholas Radburn (Lancaster University) gave a talk entitled *Supplying the slave trade: the Low Wood Gunpowder Mill, 1798-1830*. Detailed records of Low Mill are held in the Archives [*Catalogue reference DDLO*]. Four businessmen founded the Lowood Gunpowder Company in 1798. The site for the mill lay in a steep wooded ravine below Haverthwaite, and near the river Leven and the Ulverston canal. In later years railway sidings were built to the works which speeded transportation. From the outset, the directors were participants in the triangular transatlantic trade in goods and enslaved people. One of them, Joseph Fayrer, who was a slave ship captain, was appointed their agent in Liverpool. With the abolition of slavery in 1807 new markets had to be found: agents and buyers were appointed around the country to foster industrial contracts, and they were also sustained by the African palm oil trade. By 1935 the business ceased. It is now possible to visit the site which is a scheduled monument.



Dr Jill Liddington (Leeds University) spoke about *Selina Cooper and the radical suffragists of industrial Lancashire*. Dr Liddington's research interests encompass many aspects of women's history, including the struggle for the vote, the subject of her book *One hand tied behind us*. The focus of her talk was the life and work of Selina Cooper (1864-1946). Selina was from a humble background, but became a prominent suffragist who campaigned for the cause throughout the country. Dr Liddington met Mary, Selina's daughter, on several occasions, and was fortunate to secure most of Selina's documentation, which has been deposited at the Archives [*Catalogue reference DDX1137*].

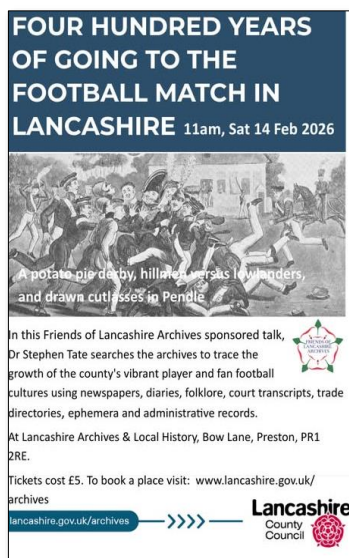
After lunch, the attendees were split into groups, to attend 3 sessions in rotation:

- A tour of the building, showing its modernist (and brutalist) architecture, and its up-to-date facilities, contrasted with photographs and objects from 50 years ago (Vicci McCann).
- A look at the forthcoming catalogue LANCAT II. The new version will be much more intuitive, and will use several filters to make searching more productive (Keri Nicholson).
- An explanation of the range of material in the Lancashire Printed Collection (Hannah Turner).

The day was a great success, thanks to the knowledgeable speakers and the enthusiasm of the staff for the wonderful collections. Thank you to Alex Miller and the Archives staff, and to Zoë Lawson, our membership secretary, who helped with the arrangements.

Marianne Howell

LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES & LOCAL HISTORY



Saturday 14 February 11:00am Four hundred years of going to the football match in Lancashire

Sponsored by the Friends of Lancashire Archives, Dr Stephen Tate's talk searches the archives to trace the growth of the county's vibrant player and fan football cultures using newspapers, diaries, folklore, court transcripts, trade directories, ephemera and administrative records.

At Lancashire Archives & Local History, Bow Lane, Preston, PR1 2RE.

To book:

<https://www6.apps.lancashire.gov.uk/w/webpage/event-details?eventid=2934741>

JOURNEYS TO THE MATCH

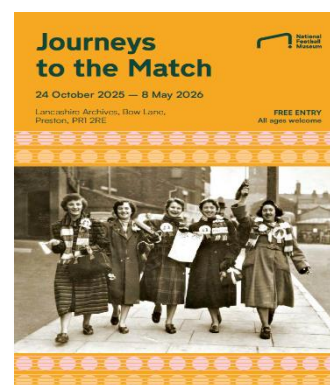
Celebrate the rituals, friendships, and joy of a match day. Journeys to the Match is a community focused exhibition, exploring the everyday traditions of football fans and what makes their match day special.

From a deep dive into the transport that fans have taken through the years, to lucky charms and match-day mates, this experience celebrates the simple joys that unite us all - no matter which teams we support.

The exhibition continues until 8 May 2026

Join our friendly team based at Lancashire Archives across school half terms for seasonal focused story times and lots of enjoyable, drop-in craft activities!

- February half-term: 11:00am – 3:00pm, Tuesday 17 and Wednesday 18 February
- Easter Holidays: 11:00am – 3:00pm, Tuesday 31 March; Wednesday 1 April; Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 April



IN THE SPOTLIGHT: MORECAMBE'S BLACK PERFORMERS

We're delighted to be hosting a pop-up exhibition as part of Lancaster City Museum's project. The aim is to highlight the dazzling contributions of internationally acclaimed performers who graced Morecambe's theatres during the late 19th and early 20th century - a time of glamour, sophistication, and vibrant cultural exchange.

The stellar line-up of those who lit up Morecambe's stages between 1850 and 1950 includes trailblazing stars of the Harlem Renaissance and Cotton Club eras, such as the charismatic Ken 'Snakehips' Johnson, the legendary Adelaide Hall, and the beloved James Hens (also known as Jimmy Cooney), who fell so deeply in love with Morecambe that he made it his home. Their stories have been meticulously researched by Kirsty Roberts, a Lancashire-based Black historian and PhD student at the University of Lancashire.

For more information please see: [In the Spotlight: Morecambe's Black Performers - Lancaster City Council](#)

GROUNDS FOR APPEAL: FIRST WORLD WAR MILITARY SERVICE APPEAL TRIBUNALS IN GREAT BRITAIN

We are delighted to announce that we are part of a new project, led by the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, which has been awarded a grant of £234,123 from [The National Lottery Heritage Fund](#). The exciting project will undertake work with 14 other archive services across England and Wales on records of First World War military service appeal tribunals. The project will run until January 2028. Find out more about what these tribunals were and what the project will involve here: [National Lottery Heritage Fund grant award: Grounds for Appeal - Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre](#)



Lancashire Archives will be seeking to recruit a team of volunteers to help us work on the military tribunal records in our collections.

LANCASHIRE LIBRARIES LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS



From city to coast to countryside Lancashire has a fascinating history. Lancashire libraries house treasure troves of heritage where you will find local history books, as well as online resources such as Ancestry, Find My Past and the British Newspaper Archive.

Image caption - 'Her country residence', 1893, Sam Thompson collection. Photograph albums in the collection are housed at Lancaster Library. You can read more about this collection [here](#)

In the bigger branches you will find a range of resources from maps to photographs, trade directories to historic newspapers, documents to rare publications.

The collections will help you uncover stories about local people, places and events. So, if you are interested in the history of your town or discovering your Lancashire ancestors we have lots of collections for you to browse through. Staff will usually be available to assist with local history collections at the following times (the libraries themselves have longer opening hours):

Accrington: Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm.

Burnley: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Saturdays 2pm-4pm.

Chorley: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Saturdays 2pm-4pm.

Clitheroe: Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays 10am-12pm, Tuesdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Wednesdays and Saturdays 2pm-4pm.

Colne: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Saturdays 10am-12pm.

Fleetwood: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm.

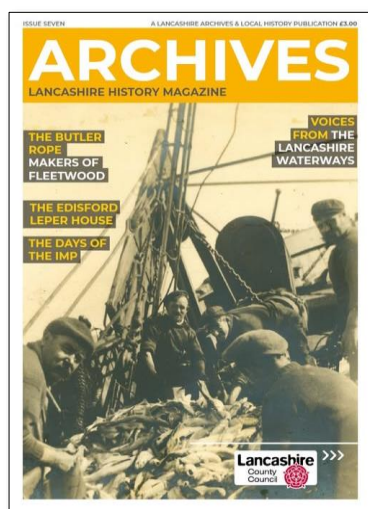
Lancaster: Mondays 2pm-4pm, Tuesdays and Thursdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Wednesdays and Saturdays 10am-12pm

Leyland: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Fridays 10am-12pm, Saturdays 2pm-4pm.

Rawtenstall: Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm.

Skelmersdale: Tuesdays and Saturdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-4pm, Wednesdays 2pm-4pm, Thursdays 10am-12pm.

St Annes: Mondays 2pm-5pm, Tuesdays 10am-12pm, 2pm-5pm, Saturdays 10am-12pm.



LANCASHIRE LOCAL HISTORY PUBLICATION – ARCHIVES – ON SALE NOW

Our local history magazine celebrates the rich and diverse history of Lancashire. It is full of stories about the people, places and events that shaped the county.

This edition brings our usual wide range of themes and historical periods. Bill Shannon looks at previously unnoticed records documenting the medieval hospital at Edisford for people with leprosy, and Bernard Kellett describes efforts to keep history alive in one of Lancashire's oldest parishes, Brindle. John Butler goes back through his family history to Fleetwood rope-makers and John Gimbaldeston shares the story of agricultural innovator, Thomas Sherdley of Pilling.

The Lancashire Museums team share updates on newly acquired bronze age artefacts and newly reviewed Second World War objects from Thornton Cleveleys; and there is an update on the Fleetwood Coastal Past project at Fleetwood Library. Mike Malley returns to Darwen and the terrible treatment of children in the wallpaper works, whilst Janet Rigby and Daniel Crowther bring us insights and stories from Lancashire's inland waterways.

The magazine is on sale at Lancashire Archives and all Lancashire libraries priced at £3. Please contact Lancashire Archives for postal orders of the magazine, email us at archives@lancashire.gov.uk or call 01772 533039.

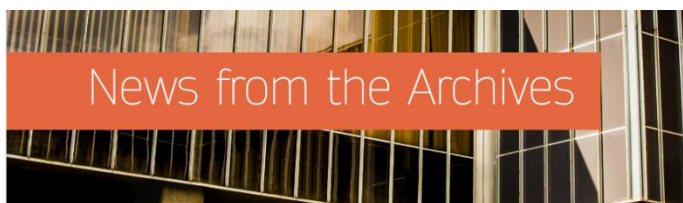
If you have an idea you'd like to discuss, please contact us at archives@lancashire.gov.uk and we'd be pleased to discuss your suggestion.

You can now read [previous editions of the magazine online](#)

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

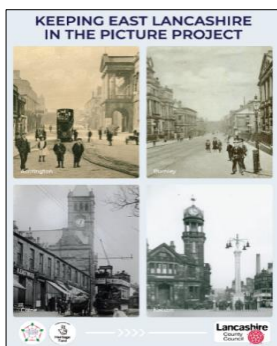
NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVES

If you would like to be added to the mailing list for *News from the Archives*, please contact us at archives@lancashire.gov.uk and mention you would like to receive *News from the Archives* – as a direct web-link or in PDF format..

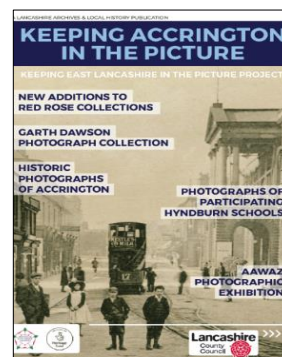


KEEPING EAST LANCASHIRE IN THE PICTURE

This was a 2-year project ending in October 2025 that saw 75 volunteers of different ages and backgrounds digitise and catalogue thousands of historic photographs from four of east Lancashire's libraries- Accrington, Burnley, Colne and Nelson. To celebrate the project and the work of the volunteers, four individual publications were created with a focus on reflecting the local historic photographic collections contained within the libraries involved in the project, plus showcasing some of the images from collections donated to the project by local photographers and a small sample of the project work undertaken with schools and local community groups.



These publications are now available at the participating libraries and from Lancashire Archives. Please contact the Archives if you would like to pick up a copy



Alex Miller

CAN YOU HELP THE FRIENDS OF LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES? THE FRIENDS WISH TO RECRUIT NEW VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Friends are Lancashire Archives' supporters club – since 1986 they've raised over £395,000 to help promote the work of the Archives across the county. Their support has enabled the purchase of archives and equipment and the funding and conservation of the collections, and they have actively promoted the use of the



archives for research and for connecting people with their Lancashire heritage.

The work of the FLA committee is vital in ensuring the Friends can continue their support for the Archives in preserving the heritage of communities throughout Lancashire whilst upholding the good governance of the Friends as a charity.

The Friends are looking for new volunteer committee members to join a wonderful team that is working to support Lancashire Archives' valuable work. You don't need to be an expert on the archives, but be ready to learn and take an interest in the work of the service. The Friends are looking for people with a range of skills and experience, and the whole committee are here to help new committee members with lots of support; and the perks definitely include some excellent cakes!

If you think this role is for you, why not contact the Friends or Lancashire Archives to arrange a time to come into the Archives for an informal chat.

Please contact us at welcome@flarchives.co.uk or archives@lancashire.gov.uk.

You can find out more about the here: <https://www.flarchives.co.uk/>

THE FRIENDS OF LANCASHIRE ARCHIVES INVITE YOU TO A ZOOM TALK

Thursday 19 February 7:30pm: *Benjamin Shaw: a working class voice from two centuries ago*, with Alan Crosby

"I have not attempted to deceive any that may read this account, by falsehoods or by selecting those circumstances that might make the most favourable appearance – but I have simply attempted to state facts, whether honourable or shameful..."

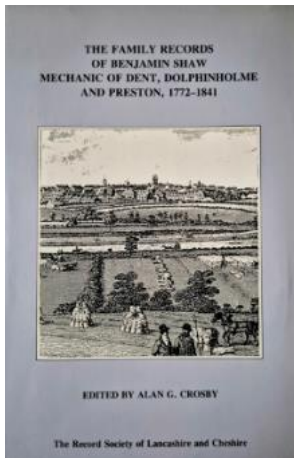
Two hundred years ago, in May 1826, a self-educated mill mechanic living in Dale Street, Preston, began to write down the story of his life. Benjamin Shaw was 54 years old, and had lived through the dramatic times of the first phase of the Industrial Revolution. Though he had done nothing to bring him fame or fortune, he had experienced everything that the fast-changing world could throw at him, from leaving the idyllic poverty of his birthplace – Dent in the Yorkshire Dales – and coming to a teeming, noisy, dirty industrial town, to illegitimacy, factory employment, child mortality, sickness, marital disharmony, abject poverty and much else besides. He clearly knew that his story was of great interest, even if to most people it would have been a tale of failure. He recognised the importance of leaving a record for posterity.

His account survived, against seemingly impossible odds, and is one of the treasures of Lancashire Archives. 'Benjamin Shaw's Family Records etc' [Catalogue reference DDX 1554/2] is now regarded as one of the most important of all English working-class memoirs, a uniquely detailed and evocative account of the harshness and challenges of life in one of the great turning points of world history, happening here in Lancashire. Benjamin's account has been edited and published by our speaker, Alan Crosby*. To mark the bicentenary of the moment when Benjamín picked up his pen and started to write this extraordinary, vivid, moving and heartbreakingly personal tale (and, for good measure, those of 30 other members of his extended family) Alan is giving this Zoom presentation for the Friends of Lancashire Archives, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year.

Join on Zoom from 7.00pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88246426558?pwd=f6agqkYlEzaN0369PKUllTj3hnPAQ.>

1 Meeting ID: 882 4642 6558. Passcode: 883523.



**Family Records of Benjamin Shaw, mechanic of Dent, Dolphinholme and Preston (1772-1841), ed. Alan Crosby.*

RSLC, Vol. CXXX, 1991. ISBN 0902593218.

NEWS FROM MEMBER SOCIETIES

BURNLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Meetings are held on Wednesdays at 2.00 p.m. at St. John's R. C. church hall, Bracewell Street, Burnley BB10 1TB. Members free, guests £2.00

11 March: *Pockets of pacifism in East Lancashire: the Local Peace Campaign during the two World Wars*, with Steven Illingworth.

8 April: *Trials of the Lancashire Witches*, with Dr Graham Kemp.

FRIENDS OF PENDLE HERITAGE

Meetings take place at Higherford Methodist Church, Barrowford BB9 6JH. Members £4, Non-members £6, Refreshments £1.



Tuesday 24 February 2:30pm: Graham Topping will give another entertaining talk on **NORI Bricks – Part 2**, The history of the Accrington brick industry. Accrington Brick and Tile Company Ltd began manufacturing at their Whinney Hill, Altham, location in 1887. (Image credit: Graham Topping)

Tuesday 24 March 2:30pm: Jane Hellebrand, author of the biography '*Undaunted*', explores the remarkable life of **The Hon Rachel Kay-Shuttleworth MBE** (1886-1967), embroiderer, lace-maker, textile collector, teacher and philanthropist - the people and circumstances that influenced her and celebrates her legacy which remains as important and relevant today as it was a hundred years ago. Copies of '*Undaunted*' will be available to purchase and Jane will be pleased to sign each book. A donation for this talk is being made to Gawthorpe Textiles Museum.



(Image credit: Gawthorpe Hall textiles collection)



Tuesday 28 April 2:30pm: Denise North: Violet's Story - The Sequel. This talk deals is a result of research using the messages, names and addresses on picture postcards collected between 1903 and 1937, which when assembled into date order tell Violet's story - and more - during this period.

(Image credit: Denise North)

MOURHOLME LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The History Society for the Old Parish of Warton

Gaskell Hall, Silverdale LA5 0RA. Visitors £2 per session. Meetings are held on Wednesdays at 7:30. See the website for details of membership
www.mourholme.co.uk

25 February 2026: Carnforth Haematite Iron Works, with Phil Baggley. A study of iron and steel making in Carnforth between 1866 and 1930. Sixty five years of innovation, process development, boom and bust.

25 March: Gandhi's Northern Holiday, with Nick Burton. Mohandas Ghandhi spent a weekend 'up North' in September 1931, during which he visited Lancashire and the West Riding.

29 April: The local finds of a metal detectorist, with Nigel Law. A presentation about Nigel's finds in the local area, encompassing the modern age, the Georgians, medieval, early medieval including Saxon/Viking, the Romans and Celts.

CHADDERTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Snippets from *The Griffin*, the society's quarterly newsletter

- *And in God's house...No. 2: Emmanuel parish church, Chadderton.* Another instalment of a series about churches which no longer exist. From small beginnings as a mission in the upper room of a cottage, a church was built in 1910, but was closed and demolished in 2017.
- *Chadderton's wartime weapon a closely guarded secret!* It wasn't until after the end of WWII that it was revealed that the factory of Cooper, McDougall &

Robertson had played its part in the war by manufacturing a dusting powder which kept men free of typhus-carrying lice. The louse had been responsible for the deaths of many men in WWI, so the government was keen to find a remedy. After trying over 100 different preparations, it was decided to manufacture the one of which the main ingredient was DDT, which proved 95% effective.

- *Townships that never developed: Pt. 6: Within the parish of Manchester. (i)* Seven northern townships: Moston, Blackley, Crumpsall, Harpurhey, Newton, Broughton and Cheetham.

The society has changed its venue to St Mark's church, Milne Street. For all enquiries about membership and the newsletter, phone the secretary 0161 652 3930, or email chaddtown@yahoo.co.uk.

Lancashire Place Name Survey

Thursday 5 March 6:30 pm Annual General Meeting, followed directly by the annual lecture ***Place-Names, Landscape and Society in Medieval North-West England*, by Alan Crosby**. Many place-names describe aspects and features of the landscape as it existed when they were coined. Historians can use these as a rich source of evidence about past land-use, economic activity, settlement and communications. This talk considers what place-names can tell us about the medieval landscape of Lancashire.

The meeting will be hosted on Zoom by the Friends of Lancashire Archives
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86996698372?pwd=iQwHXIA7rGnfr5jOvvL6TQ4ILwacBc.1>
 Meeting ID: 869 9669 8372. Passcode: 145449

We are seeking new volunteers to help with the project: collecting names from archive catalogues, original documents, maps, and printed sources.

To find out more please see our website
www.lancspns.weebly.com

Contact LPNS chair and volunteer coordinator Nigel Neil
nigelrjneil@googlemail.com



Barley (Bayrlegh in 1324): 'the clearing in the wood where barley was grown'

[Federation newsletter 53, November 2025 carried two articles about the Survey – one asking for new volunteers, and the other outlining the history of the Survey and the linguistic richness of the area – Ed.]

If you would like to know more, email Jonathan Masters
jonathansmasters@hotmail.com

REGIONAL HERITAGE CENTRE

Saturday 7 March: 53rd Annual Archaeology Forum

Outline programme:

- The Roman cemetery in Broughton – Oxford Archaeology
- Correction of erroneous dating in the Yorkshire Dales – Dr David Johnson
- A prehistoric monument complex near Ribbleshead – Yvonne Luke
- Examining finds from Lancashire and Cumbria through the lens of animal impact – Theodore Muscillo

Friday 24 April: Visit to Chetham's Library. Guided tour with Dr Alexander Wragge-Morley, Lancaster University science and medicine historian. **Places limited.**

Saturday 16 May: *Libraries and Learning in the North West*, a full-day study event in association with Global Link.

For booking details www.lancaster.ac.uk/regional-heritage-centre/

NB: see the website for important changes to parking arrangements for on-site events.

BARNOLDSWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

The first meeting of the year will take place on 26 March in the OAP Centre, 14 Frank Street, Barnoldswick BB18 5AE.

The Society has prepared an exhibition 'Ken Wilson and the Co-op', which tells the story of the Co-op in Barnoldswick through the eyes of the Barnoldswick-born writer and artist. Ken takes us through to the 1980s. The Society has brought the exhibition up to date with recent photographs and material from its archives.



The photographs from the Society's collection show the 'old' Co-op on Albert Road shortly before it was demolished, and the same building in happier times with a wagon displaying a selection of 'CWS own production' clothing.



Contact the Society via Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/barnoldswickhistorysociety/>

WIGAN BUILDING PRESERVATION TRUST

A profile of a member society

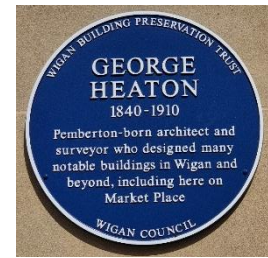


Protecting the town's past for future generations

Wigan Building Preservation Trust (WBPT) is a local heritage organisation dedicated to safeguarding, promoting and re-using Wigan's historic buildings. Established to respond to the growing threat faced by many of the borough's older structures, the Trust works to ensure that buildings of architectural, historic and community value are not lost through neglect, inappropriate development or demolition.

At the heart of WBPT's work is the belief that historic buildings are central to Wigan's identity. From major civic buildings and places of worship to industrial structures, public houses and residential streets, the Trust recognises that each contributes to a broader understanding of Wigan's social, economic and architectural development.

Research and documentation underpin much of the Trust's activity. Through its website www.wiganbuildings.co.uk, WBPT maintains an extensive and growing record of historic and notable buildings across the borough. The site includes building histories, architectural descriptions, photographs, mapping and information on buildings at risk, providing a valuable reference for researchers, planners, and the wider public. One such project resulted in the awarding by the Council of a blue plaque to honour George Heaton, the town's most prolific Victorian architect.



Margery Booth - The Operatic Spy

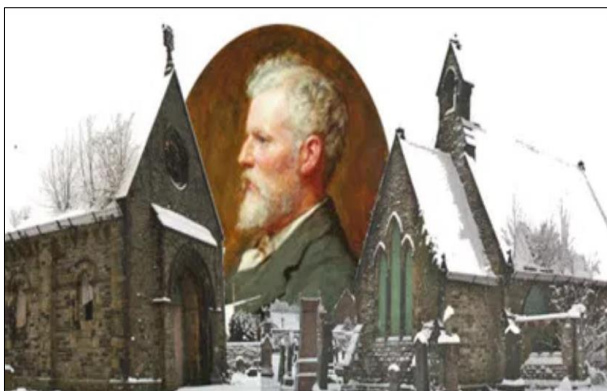
The revised and updated true story of Margery Booth, the famous Wigan born opera singer who spied for Britain in Berlin during WW2. By Graham Taylor.

Complementing this, www.wiganlocalhistory.org.uk focuses on the people, events and communities that shaped Wigan. The site features articles on local families, industries, institutions and everyday life, drawing together documentary sources, census material, cemetery indexes, photographs and original research. Together, the two websites present an integrated view of Wigan's built environment and the human stories connected to it.

Digital engagement and interpretation are increasingly important to the Trust's work. A further project currently being developed is the establishment of a **Discovery Room**, designed to support the heritage-led approach to the future of **Queen's Hall Methodist Church**, a listed building in Wigan town centre whose structure is at risk. The room provides a dedicated space for recording, interpreting and sharing Wigan's history using digital and immersive technologies. It is intended to host virtual tours, recorded talks, live-streamed events and rotating heritage displays, allowing visitors to explore Wigan's buildings, streets and communities in new and engaging ways. It will also serve as an educational and community resource, supporting school visits, volunteer-led activities and public events. By linking physical heritage with digital interpretation, the project will help ensure that the history of Queen's Hall and the wider town is accessible to a broad audience, both on site and online.

WBPT plays an active role in identifying, listing and highlighting buildings at risk, encouraging constructive dialogue with owners, developers and the local authority to find sustainable futures for threatened buildings. This advocacy is informed by the research and case studies published through the Trust's websites and projects. Community involvement is central to the Trust's mission. WBPT works with volunteers, local groups and schools to develop heritage initiatives that connect people directly with historic places. Educational programmes, guided walks, talks and creative projects are designed to foster pride, curiosity and a sense of ownership in Wigan's historic environment, particularly among younger generations.





A key current conservation project is the Trust's involvement in the restoration of the **Waterhouse Chapels at Ince Cemetery**, the first public works of the eminent Victorian architect Alfred Waterhouse. The project combines conservation, research, digital interpretation and community engagement, demonstrating how historic buildings can be re-imagined as active heritage assets. Email

friendswaterhousechapels@gmail.com

Looking ahead, Wigan Building Preservation Trust aims to expand its research-led and community-focused approach, strengthening partnerships, developing digital resources and supporting the repair, re-use and interpretation of historic buildings across the borough. Through its websites, the Discovery Room, and its wider conservation and engagement work, WBPT continues to champion Wigan's historic buildings as living links between past, present and future. Contact the Trust via email: WiganBPT1@outlook.com.

Peter Fleetwood, Co-founder

NEWS ROUNDUP



JUDGES LODGINGS 400

Voices from Our Community Oral History Project

In 2025, the Judges' Lodgings Museum celebrated 400 years of being the oldest townhouse in Lancaster, and 50 years of its operation by Lancashire County Council as a

museum. This project seeks to talk to people with memories and experience of any aspect of the site's history. We want to hear personal stories if you or your family had a connection with this building and the people who worked here. This project is supported by the National Lottery thanks to National Lottery players.

This research aims to record the memories of anyone with an association or experience of the Judges Lodgings, to help us develop our understanding of how the site operated, to contribute to new displays, and as a source for future research.

Participation will involve an interview either at the Lodgings or online, or possibly a visit at home. The interview will be recorded if permission is given. Participants will be asked to complete a consent form, to comply with GDPR, giving permission to store personal details and to allow the recording to be used in future. Full information about security of the stored data will be given.

Audio recordings and interview transcripts will be stored at Lancashire Archives in Preston, where they will be catalogued and made available for future researchers.

Participants are being interviewed between December 2025 and April 2026.

For further information, please contact us on 01524 581241 (Tuesday to Friday) or email us at judgeslodgings@lancashire.gov.uk.

Judges' Lodgings is a Grade 1 listed building and Accredited Museum, owned by Lancashire County Council and managed by Lancashire County Museum Service

www.lancashire.gov.uk/museums



HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION



The HA website has a calendar of historical anniversaries and significant dates occurring in 2026, which is free to download. It also has links to resources which may help with planning: How to build an anniversary – Lucy Worsley; and two resources for teachers: How to use significant anniversaries in teaching; and Ideas for assemblies.

www.history.org.uk

HISTORIC ENGLAND – HERITAGE AT RISK

The recently published list from Historic England shows that 9 structures in the north west have been taken off the list, although 13 more have been added.

Among new entries is the Priory and Parish Church of St Mary in Lancaster, which is affected by subsidence which altering the alignment of its south side. The church, dating from around 1430, was described by Pevsner as having "remarkable architectural details" with "about the most luxuriant canopies in the country".



Another new listing is that for St Wilfrid's in Standish. A large project has recently restored the spire, but unfortunately a serious infestation of death watch beetle has been discovered. The church is the only Grade I listed building in the borough of Wigan, and has one of the finest Tudor ceilings in the country. Pevsner believed it to be one of the most interesting churches in the county.

I took the opportunity to look in some detail at the register. At first it seems concerning that there are so many entries, but closer inspection shows that the length of the list does not give an accurate picture of the situation.

- Some are clearly inaccurate: one simply says Carnforth – not the whole town surely?
- Others are for structures which could easily be remediated – single gravestones, for example.
- There are simple duplicate entries, while some are for the same building – there are 3 entries for St Thomas the Martyr at Upholland.
- Some buildings – for example the Morecambe Winter Gardens and Haigh Hall in Wigan – are undergoing extensive restoration, and will presumably be removed from the list when work has finished.

Sadly, a great many of the entries across the country are for churches, illustrating the decline in attendance and cost of upkeep in recent times.

www.hitoricengland.org.uk/heritage-at-risk/

Marianne Howell

HISTORIC RIFLE RANGES IN THE BURNLEY-ACCRINGTON AREA

In the early Summer of 2024 Professor Richard Horrocks gave an interesting and well-received presentation to the Hapton Heritage Group about the Hameldon Rifle Range which is in their area. To supplement this talk, Bill Flentjie kindly provided a summary of the wider history of rifle ranges in the Burnley – Accrington Area.

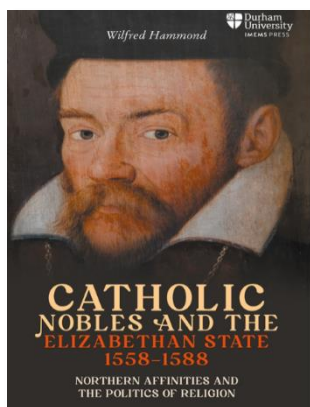
Such rifle ranges were used by the local volunteer rifle corps which were formed in response to fears that Britain might be caught up in a wider European conflict, following the outbreak of war between France and the Austrian Empire on 29 April 1859 (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volunteer_Force).

The Rifle Volunteer public house off Todmorden Road in Burnley (which closed only recently) also clearly indicated the connection between these volunteer units and their local area, which is worthy of further investigation and recognition.

Both Richard and Bill's presentations are available on <https://www.haptonheritage.co.uk/> under the sub-heading '*Historical Hapton*'

John Trippier

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST



Catholic nobles and the Elizabethan State 1558 to 1588: Northern affinities and the politics of religion

Wilfred Hammond

Published on behalf of Durham University IMEMS Press, by Boydell and Brewer 2025 in the series 'Catholicisms circa 1450 to circa 1800'.

ISBN 978-1914967030. Price £130. Also available as an ebook in PDF format and ebook format. For more details see the Boydell website at <https://tinyurl.com/2kjs5vz>.

This is a very important book both in terms of national history and of Lancashire's history, exemplifying the way in which the different 'levels' of historical processes and patterns can interact and interlock. Its special importance in the context of national history lies in its focus on the numerous very real dangers to Queen Elizabeth and her government during the first 30 years of her reign (and particularly in the period from 1567 to 1571), but – innovatively - looking at them from an essentially provincial perspective, in which Lancashire, 'the very sink of popery', plays a very important part. The Stanley family, Earls of Derby, and their various social, political and familial connections, provide a central element in this analysis. The book reassesses the role of the provinces and, in particular, the provincial nobility, including its special focus on the Stanleys themselves, and in doing so highlights the frightening reality of the dangers that Elizabeth faced. This is a perspective which previously has not been given the weight which it merited, perhaps because there has tended to be a London-centric view of events.

Hammond emphasises the crucial significance of the Northern Rebellion in 1569-1570, when the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland took up arms against Elizabeth, in support of the restoration of Catholic worship and the claims of Mary Queen of Scots. The attitude of Derby and the Stanleys was a fundamental consideration, since if he joined the rebellion all of northern England would be in revolt. This highlights the significance of the Stanley interest as a provincial power base. They were as princes in their own area and were more than just provincial nobility. They had semi-regal powers in the Isle of Man, which they owned; they were hereditary Lords Lieutenant of Lancashire and Cheshire; they were major landowners, and they were also closely related to the Crown. The first Earl married Lady Margaret Beaufort, and was the stepfather of King Henry VII, while the Countess Margaret, wife of the 4th Earl, was the great-niece of King Henry VIII, via her grandmother, his younger sister Mary. She therefore had a sizeable dose of Tudor blood.

This made her a serious potential candidate for the throne as a successor to Elizabeth. Margaret's adherence to the Catholic Party was therefore an important element in the religious and political struggles of the 1560s and 1570s. From the point of view of the Privy Council, this made the loyalty and religious affiliation of the Earl, his family and his household a matter of serious concern. It was widely suspected that the 4th Earl was excessively tolerant of Catholics and their faith, if not

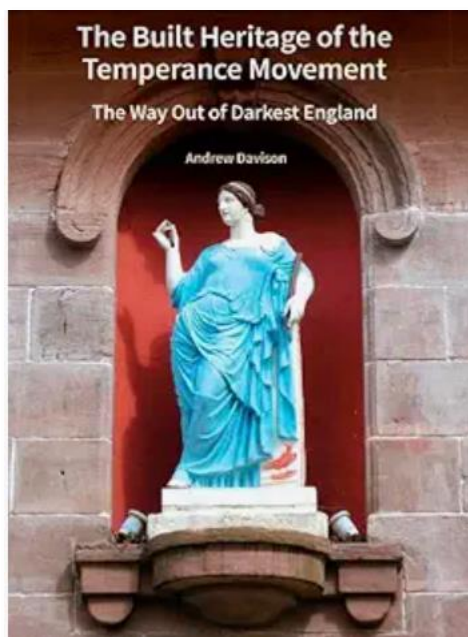
a crypto-Catholic himself, so it was important for him not to be seen as an unstable or disaffected influence.

However, Wilfred Hammond argues that Derby frustrated and impeded key Protestant reforms by the use of delaying tactics, inertia and behind-the-scenes activity. Ultimately, he was unsuccessful, but that was an outcome which was certainly not a foregone conclusion. The most dramatic new material in his volume is that which concerns a major conspiracy, in the summer of 1570, between Thomas and Edward Stanley, the younger sons of the 4th Earl, and Sir Thomas Gerard of Bryn. Their plan was 'to liberate the queen of Scots, assert her claim to both kingdoms, and thereby transform the religious settlement across the British Isles ... Rather than a minor peripheral disturbance, the conspiracy was central to a crisis both of the English state and the British archipelago'. These machinations were linked with the excommunication of Elizabeth in 1570, and the parallel scheming which centred on the plan to marry the Duke of Norfolk to the future queen Mary.

Hammond recounts the turbulent and complex events of 1569-1570 and in a key section entitled 'The Stanleys in Archipelagic Politics' he demonstrates the breadth and scale of Stanley interests. His analysis of the conspiracy makes it clear that the Earl himself must have known what was afoot, including the evidence that Mary was to be spirited away from house arrest at Chatsworth and taken to the Isle of Man, Stanley's own kingdom. And the power or authority wielded by the Stanleys is emphasised by the extraordinary fact that after the plot was uncovered, the two Stanleys and Gerard – who had plotted the overthrow of Elizabeth and her government, the installation of Mary as queen of England, and the complete reversal of the 1559 religious settlement – were given only token punishments and were free men within two years of their offence being discovered.

This is a fascinating book, telling an extraordinary narrative about a key period in the story of Lancashire's greatest family. It has been meticulously researched from a tremendous range of primary and secondary sources in a diversity of locations (including the Vatican Archives). The bibliography of primary sources runs to twelve pages, with 21 pages of secondary sources. This is despite the loss, lamented by the author, of almost all the personal papers of the Stanley protagonists from this period, which could have greatly reinforced the analysis. This is not a light read – given the complexity and intricacy of the subject, it could not possibly be so – but it is a masterclass in assembling and setting out evidence and in teasing out the tangled connections which meshed the Stanleys into the higher and middle levels of English society. It should be considered as essential reading for anybody interested in mid-16th century Lancashire and its society, religion and politics.

Review by Alan Crosby



THE BUILT HERITAGE OF THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

The way out of darkest England

Andrew Davison

Historic England, 2026. ISBN 9781836245834

272pp. £40 from Liverpool University Press

<https://tinyurl.com/54s6bpwk> (Also available on Amazon.)

About the Author: Andrew Davison trained as an archaeologist. He is an Inspector of Ancient Monuments with Historic England. He also has interests in medieval brewing and the development of the public house.

Temperance was one of the most influential social movements of the 19th century, addressing the problem of alcohol abuse which led to widespread poverty and social distress. Reformers, inspired by American activists, established the first temperance societies in the 1830s. Millions of people 'signed the pledge', committing to a life of abstinence from alcohol. Temperance supporters raised funds to provide venues as alternatives to places which sold alcohol. Temperance halls and pubs, billiard halls, reading rooms and coffee taverns were designed to give people an alternative form of drinks and pastimes. The book reveals the physical legacy of the movement, as well as its far-reaching influence.

.....
The editor continues the theme.

The book states that in the period 1880 to 1914 there were over 500 buildings associated with the movement. The firm, Temperance Billiard Halls Ltd, of Pendleton was responsible for many of them.

Some buildings mentioned in the book from the north west are:

- The Temperance Billiard Hall in Chorlton (now a pub run by a well-known chain!)
- Billiard halls in Moss Side, Sale and Cheetham
- The Embassy Club in Rochdale Road, Harpurhey
- Onward House, Deansgate

Of course, it is well known that Preston played an important role in the birth of the Temperance movement. Joseph Livesey, a cheesemonger, together with 6 other local men, the 'Seven Men of Preston', signed a public pledge of abstinence in 1832.

One edifice mentioned in the book is the Preston Abstinence Memorial in the cemetery at Ribblesdale. The Grade II monument is inscribed *Erected 1859 to*

commemorate the origin in Preston of total abstinence from all intoxicating liquor, and is surrounded by memorials to Livesey and other pioneers.



The movement continued to grow, as shown by this gathering - The temperance movement jubilee, held in the Preston Corn Exchange in 1882

Red Rose Collections 214763

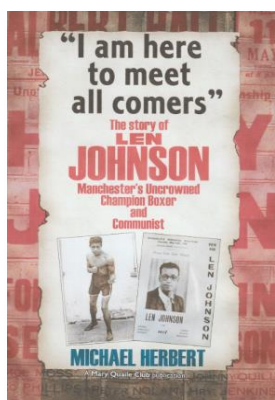
In time, the movement gained its own premises – The Temperance Hall in North Road, Preston

Red Rose Collections 213780



Further sources of information

- Historic England blog <https://tinyurl.com/3kt7fhd5>
- From the Lancashire and North West magazine, July 2021 - a 20-minute read by Margaret Brecknell
https://issuu.com/lancashiremag/docs/lm_july_21/s/12341302
- The newly-reopened Harris Museum and Library in Preston has displays about the temperance movement
- Lancashire University houses the Livesey collection
<https://tinyurl.com/29hebszd>
- Preston Abstinence Memorial – from preston.mylancs.uk
<https://tinyurl.com/yhb9a7b4>



“I AM HERE TO MEET ALL COMERS”

**The story of Len Johnson
Manchester's uncrowned champion boxer
and communist**

Michael Herbert

ISBN 9781291944822 243pp pbk

Price £11.95. Available from Lulu <https://tinyurl.com/48fzd6sy>

The book tells the story of Leonard Benker Johnson (1902-1974) who was born in Manchester to a Manchester-Irish mother and a West African father. Even though he was one of the most successful middleweight boxers of the 1920s, the British Boxing

Board of Control barred him from aiming for a title because he was not white (the ban was not lifted until 1948).

He retired from the ring in 1933, but toured the country with his boxing booth until 1939. During the war he worked in Civil Defence.

In 1945 he became an active member of the Communist Party, speaking at public meetings and standing for the council in Moss Side. He attended the Pan African Congress in Manchester and was a co-founder of the New International Society in Moss Side which campaigned against racial discrimination at home and abroad.

About the author: Michael Herbert is a socialist historian. His published works include *The wearing of the Green: a political history of the Irish in Manchester*; and *For the sake of the women who are to come after: Manchester radical women 1914 to 1945*. He writes about working class history on the Red Flag walks blog <https://redflagwalks.wordpress.com/>. Michael can be contacted via email redflagwalks@gmail.com

THE GENERAL STRIKE 1926



We would be interested to know whether any societies are planning to mark 100 years since the general strike Does your society hold any records? How was your area affected by the strike?

Tyldesley miners outside the Miners Hall during the strike

Wikimedia Commons

The strike lasted for nine days, from 4 to 12 May 1926. It was called by the TUC in an unsuccessful attempt to force the British government to act to prevent wage reductions and worsening conditions for 1.2 million locked-out coal miners. Some 1.7 million workers went out, especially in transport and heavy industry.

The Working Class Movement Library in Salford is planning a programme of commemoration, in conjunction with several partners, such as the Peoples' History Museum www.phm.org.uk. The WCML has an interactive map showing places affected by the strike; they will be selling commemorative merchandise; the library has an extensive collection of material about the strike; and there will be an exhibition starting in May. www.wcml.org.uk.

COPY DATE FOR NEXT EDITION: MONDAY 27 APRIL