

Bolton's Genies



The Monthly Newsletter of the Bolton Family History Society:

<http://www.bolton.mlfhs.org.uk/>

Newsletter Comments and Speaker Queries to : boltongenies@mlfhs.org.uk

Research help, Bookings and General Queries: bolton@mlfhs.org.uk
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Bolton Family History Society is a branch of The Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society.

Contents of the Member Area. Note various Bolton databases <https://goo.gl/QW1jWb>

Other benefits and how to join <https://goo.gl/tjStxw>

Well hello all, and here we are back again after a short but very busy month. Exciting times. –



Our Chairman Brian Whittle will now bring you up to date on our current situation and hopes for the future.

We have started off the New Year where we left off last year, very busy. Already we have had three well attended meetings, a very successful Open Day run in conjunction with Bolton History Centre, (estimated over 200 people attended the various functions). Rita Greenwood and Barbara Owen are running workshops from 11th March 2017 at Bolton Library for those who have hit a brick wall, with a small group for beginners. We have also launched a Face Book page which we hope will become more popular over the coming months, please have a look and give us some feedback if you wish. For us to continue to grow we will need more help in certain areas. We had 14 people helping at the Open Day but for us to develop further we need more help in the following areas:

1. Could you help us at our meetings? There are various jobs need doing, even helping serve tea and coffee is an important job. We are trying to create a friendly and caring atmosphere at the meetings. If you feel that you can help please see Barbara Owen to offer some assistance.
2. If you are not regularly attending our meetings or do not live locally there are several ways you can help the society by doing some work at home. These include:
 - a) Indexing; Take over the job of indexing the URL's from the Genie on our website each month.
 - b) Manchester Genealogist; Could you write an article with Bolton interests to help promote Bolton Branch if so can you contact Rita Greenwood.
 - c) Could you do some transcribing at home or at Bolton History Centre, there are several projects which we need help with, please contact Graham Holt.
 - d) Are there any projects that you are interested in that are not on our website that you could take a lead on? Please contact Graham Holt.

We have several ideas that we would like to develop further, but, without more help we are reluctant to take these on unless we can encourage more people to help. These include having our own shop on our website to sell maps, stationery and books. Having a library at our meeting where we can lend



out books for a modest charge. Organising more ambitious trips and finally we would like more help with training courses to help us build the society and spread the interest in Family History in the Bolton area. Can I say a big thank you to all the committee members and our helpful volunteers, without your time and efforts we would not be in as strong a position as we are now?

Thank you.

Brian Whittle

OUR MONTHLY MEETINGS

- **Where?**

Bolton Old Links Golf Club, Montserrat Brow, Chorley Old Road BL1 5SU.

Buses <http://goo.gl/3llsRd> . All MLFHS members free. £2.00 to non-members unless joining on the night.

- **When?**

7pm beverages available for 7.30pm start , on the first Wednesday of each month. Extras include a Help Desk for personal research, Stationery Table for discounted equipment, and recycle service for your used Family History Magazines



RECENT TRIPS AND COMING EVENTS

Thursday February 9th Rita's "Enjoy Learning" Class Trip to the Lancashire Archives Preston

<https://goo.gl/44JC2h> This has now become a near annual early Spring event on this ongoing course, and once again there was something different for us to see. Vicci McCann senior archivist, greeted us and gave us an overview of what they have in the Lancashire collection, and what similarities to expect in other county record offices elsewhere. Most items are on the online catalogue but not all, and if wanting anything specific it is always worth emailing <https://goo.gl/JpycxE> first to ensure the item is there and available. Regulars will know that a CARN ticket is required <https://goo.gl/pZ2nb3> before visiting any local authority record office, and once there, a request slip needs to be completed to order the item(s).



We were then taken into the county strong room, and shown some more treasures after being shown a thermo-hygrograph which measures and helps control the temperature and humidity of the archive. Next came some examples of their wonderful collections as shown below. The first was a beautiful book of hours

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Book_of_hours . This one which belonged to an 'Edward Molyneux' is

now in the Formby Roman Catholic collection (RCBO). It is made of vellum and contains late 15th and early 16th century illumination (they think). Next a medical document called a 'vade mecum' which is a handbook or guide to be kept constantly at hand for consultation. It is made of vellum and has three different types of coloured ink. Again, it is from the late 1400s and contains medical information and luna cycles (DDX 47/1). The next item we were shown was a medieval charter from the Shireburne Weld family of Stonyhurst (DDST) and is from Henry II to Geoffrey the Crossbowman; for his homage and faithful services gifting lands in Hambleton, 11 Mar [1166] (DDST/BOX119). Now came copies of the 'Lock Out' cartoon which are from about 1853/1854 and are by an unknown artist, depicting satirical scenes from the time of the Preston Lock-Out which was a long industrial dispute in the textile industry over wages (DDPR/138/87b), and lastly a letter, dated 6 Nov 1605, from John Sumner in London to William Farrington in Worden, and describes the discovery of the gun powder plot (DDF), (transcriptions available on request).



As usual we completed the tour feeling a little “gob smacked” if you will pardon the expression. It is an amazing feeling to see these pieces of history there in front of us and freely available to be studied, (under controlled conditions of course).

Some of our party stayed on to undertake private research, whilst the rest of us returned home resolved to make more effort with our own research.

Saturday February 11th Open Day at the Bolton Central Library

Well at last the day arrived, after several weeks of planning and preparation. We had asked for, and received, many offers of extra help from various BFHS members, and publicised as well as we could via the local newspaper, nearby local history societies, various FaceBook pages the MLFHS forum, and this newsletter of course. The “Management Team” of Chairman Brian Whittle, Research Officer Graham Holt, and Secretary Barbara Owen had had several preparatory meetings with Archivists Julie Lamara and Caroline Furey, displays had been agreed on and prepared, responsibilities allocated, and there seemed little more we could do except cross our fingers, and hope for the best.

Brian started the morning off with a 7.50am interview on Radio Manchester with Andy Crane, arranged by Julie, where he explained it is only possible to make limited progress researching family history via the internet. Much more can be achieved by using the facilities of the local family history society, if possible attending their meetings and courses, and learning how to “flesh out” our ancestor’s lives. There is a vast resource of archived documents, as yet not digitalised, (only 1% of the Lancashire Record Office is digitalised apparently). Liaising with other local history societies is also useful, plus exploring nearby places of historical interest, and this has developed our busy social scene as well.

We had all arrived at our posts in the library by 9.15am and the first booked people to visit the vaults were there promptly by 9.30am. Our talks started in the theatre at 10am when Rita and Graham gave their respective accounts of how to start researching family history, and the local resources available in the Bolton History Centre. The attendance was variable here but we had 55 listening at one point. The rolling two hourly group visits to the vaults continued throughout the day, up to the last one at 3.30pm, and mostly running over time allocation due to interest. A Bolton News reporter dropped in for a chat with Brian at midday <https://goo.gl/nPe3gT> . The queue at the Help Desk run by Margaret and Colin Calderbank, and later by Rita Greenwood and Barbara Owen in the History Centre was constant. Our stationery desk of genealogical equipment and books also did brisk work all day. We all staggered to our homes at tea time, I



must say pretty pleased with ourselves, but shattered. Our thanks must go to Archivists Julie and Caroline who worked tirelessly to help us make the day go well, plus Jim and Lois assisting in the background, (plus, the wonderful security man who picked up Brian’s brief case that had been inadvertently left behind in the foyer).

Please now let’s continue to support them and use their facilities. For more information re the archive contact Tel: 01204 332194 or E-mail: Julie.lamara@bolton.gov.uk .

Just seen this in the BN. Do you think we might be contributing to this <https://goo.gl/CvLPC1> **Booming**



tourism industry generates more than £420 million for Bolton's economy?

Wednesday March 1st Steve Gill “Preserving your past for their future”. Steve first showed some typical examples of what most of us must have in our family archives of “glum looking grannies and granddads”, commenting on how unexciting they might seem at first, but then reminding us that, if Victorian, these could be 180 years old, pre-Boer War 118 years old, Edwardian 116 years old etc., and as such all these should be considered valuable family antiques which should be passed on to the next generations. Restoration linked questions of Where? Why? and When? might help with the more important question of Who? First popular photos from circa 1850 were with background details mainly of outdoor scenes providing locality clues, and as they were studio pictures and expensive then, the question of, “was this a special event?” should be asked. Later clues re studio furnishings i.e. tablecloths, chairs etc. which might appear in more than one picture and were usually rearranged each year, can assist with date and linking family members. A sequence of pictures of the same person in different clothing can indicate the stages of their life journey. Fashion styles in hats and clothing can indicate the period of time, with quite short windows to maybe 5 years with the younger generation. Magnifying glasses may help identify specific jewellery, ribbons, books etc. indicating a recent bereavement or family, church or political event which will assist with dating. The mounting can also provide clues. If the photo is on a postcard centre lines and writing on them was only permitted after 1906.



Photos 100 years plus, in general were much better quality than more recent models and are much easier to restore. Powerpoint demonstrations showed the “magical restorations” that can be achieved if the original was good quality. Most modern photos were sadly not that good in the first place, although some have and can be “touched up” either on the negative or print.

Steve finished his talk with timely reminders of the challenge of conservation. The main rule here is to protect from environmental damage e.g. sunlight, smoke, damp, poor mounting. Take digital copies and prints from them for everyday use, and protect the original in specialist acid free covering. Consider if presented with a

flood, fire etc. what would be your priority to save; a 150-year-old family photograph, or a 150-year-old painting or piece of furniture. We should also consider how many actual prints we save now, or are they nearly all digital copies on the phone, never to see paper? How will these be passed down to the next generation?

Friday March 3rd Visit to St Mary the Virgin, Deane <https://goo.gl/ZeaGnA> Well approximately 60 of us met here on a rainy afternoon, and ventured into the church (as seen above in our banner picture on a sunny day). Maybe half of us, yours truly included, had never been there before, and there were audible gasps of amazement as we walked in, I think all were surprised that we could have such a beautiful gem of a church tucked away, here in Bolton. We were a mixed group of BFHS, plus Westhoughton LHS, plus a few guests, all meeting up with the common interest of having the chance to look around this treasure which dates back to 13th C at least. Because of its age, the structure is far more substantial than the more modern, now decaying, Victorian buildings built to accommodate the expansion of the parish, and influx of migrating workers of the industrial revolution.



I am not going to attempt to give an account of the historical facts as there is plenty available online, and we were also each given a handout. The Rev Terry Clark greeted us, and gave us an overview of its story. He first warned us that if it rained hard again it would sound like bullets on the 1980 stainless steel roof, (which might not now pass planning approval,) but I suspect the thought passed all our minds that at least it was intact and doing its job, and the building was not likely to become another victim of the lead strippers causing damage to so many of our old buildings. Special features inside include commemoration

windows to the Wesleys, and the Bolton Protestant martyr George Marsh, and various members of the Hulton family who had been long time generous benefactors. See link above. The 400-year-old oak ceiling and various secluded doors and filled in windows were pointed out. It was described how in its "Hay Day" the nave had been full to bursting 3 x each Sunday, plus balconies, now removed, had taken the overflow. Terry next answered various questions such as: - "What is the difference between a vicar and a rector?", Answer,= historically the source of income, rectors got income from their "glebes" or estate, vicars salaries from a benefactor. Times have changed though and they now have "team vicars" and team rectors". Features of the church were discussed e.g. there is no tunnel going to St Peters, and there are unconfirmed stories of a "Crusade Cross",

Burial records are there on paper up to 1870s and soon to be digitalised with a sales outlet, , baptism and marriage records are available at Bolton Archives and via BFHS website. Enquiries are coming in regularly



from all over the world, and it is lack of man power which is the problem in answering promptly. Some more in depth enquiries may be dealt with for a fee of? £19. Contact archive@deanechurch.co.uk

The main problem now is the sadly overgrown state of the graveyard which is apparently the second largest in England <https://goo.gl/V789tY> .

There are hopes for a serious work programme to commence some clearance this summer, but it will need man power +++, as opposed to any machinery, as the ground is so uneven and the graves so vulnerable. Serious suggestions will be welcome.

It was now noticeably quite cool in the building, and we were grateful for the hot drink and biscuits. We slowly drifted outside, taking in an overview of the ground covering of brambles, Japanese knotweed, ivy, and nettles, and that is just what we could see. How on earth can this challenge can be met, but come on folks, this is your church, how can this be done? The responsibility is sadly to the owners of the graves <https://goo.gl/OnUaNE> .

It was also a pleasure to be able to greet Mr and Mrs Holden. Mr Holden was able to make the special trip despite ill health, to see the memorial chapel on the left of the church door that apparently, he had helped make and fit 50+years ago,. A proud moment I am sure.



Sunday 12th March Bolton Socialist Club, Wood Street, Bolton, International Women's Day Celebration
Free admission 2.00 Tea and cakes 3.00 The Lynx Theatre presents: "Sylvia THE play about Sylvia Pankhurst, artist and suffragette".

Wednesday 5th April Caroline Furey, Bolton Archivist, Collection Access Officer.

talking about pre-NHS service in Bolton. Just after the war people used a lot of home-made remedies to ward off colds and various complaints. This picture was taken from an old remedy book full of recipes of medicine and cakes, dating back to 1946/7 (falling to bits but still readable) Meeting times 7.00 for coffee & tea, 7.30 meeting at Old Links Gold Club, Chorley Old Road, Bolton. all welcome



Wednesday May 3rd Change of Speaker. A quick bad news/ good news mention here. John Marsden our advertised speaker has had to cancel, BUT Anita Forth has kindly agreed to step in and will give her long delayed talk about the Edgworth to Crowthorn - the story of a Lancashire Children's Home.

<https://goo.gl/idvH4U> . This will be preceded by our 15-minute max annual General Meeting

Thursday 4th May at 11.00am to Ordsall Hall, Salford. <https://goo.gl/dSflmi> . The cost is £5.00 per head for the guided tour, and includes tea and coffee or there are café facilities. People need to make their own way there but anyone without a car we will hopefully be able to give them a lift but it is easily accessible via the

Tram. There is a charge to park your car (£3). You can pay on the day and there is a limit of 40 places. Please let Val know if you are going by the next meeting at Bolton Old Links in April.

Monday 17th July to Saturday 22nd July c/o Oldham MLFHS Branch Visit to The National Archives
contact Mary Pendlebury mary@magic-cats.fsnet.co.uk **tel 0161 620 6398.** Mary tells us

Cost: £263 per person for 5 nights' bed and breakfast. Accommodation: College Hall Malet Street, London WC1H 9EX <http://halls.london.ac.uk/summer-housing/college-hall> .

Details have now been finalised for the Research Visit to London organised by the Oldham and District branch. This will be the 20th consecutive annual visit - not a bad record. Mary reports "As we no longer organise transport to London (we all go by our favourite means of transport at a time that suits us) anyone can join our visit no matter where they live. We will go to the National Archive at Kew on the Tuesday for individual research and to show the ropes to anyone who hasn't been before. There will also be a visit to the Sound Archive at the British Library (date to be confirmed later). Neither of these visits is compulsory - you can do whatever you like, whenever you like. Please get in touch with me directly for further details.

GENIE'S TIPS for

Find a will or probate (England and Wales) <https://goo.gl/PzsLER>

Find a will or 'grant of representation' for people who died in or after 1858. A 'grant of representation' gives someone the legal right to deal with a deceased person's estate. This right is called 'probate'.

Online Parish Clerks Websites. <https://goo.gl/5YtW1b> **UKBMD**

The term OPC refers to unpaid volunteers who are willing to help others with their genealogical research. They collect, collate and transcribe records for various parishes within their respective areas. Here is a list of the current participants.

Index of places in England and Wales <https://goo.gl/RVW6rK> Copyright © 2016 Brett Langston. Updated Jan 2016 *For each place listed, this index shows the county and registration district in which it was situated between 1837 and 1974, at which latter date the districts were considerably altered.*

*Please note that this is not intended to be a comprehensive gazetteer of place names, and that only civil parishes named in the General Register Offices published lists are included. These often differed from the ancient parishes in existence at the start of the 19th century. this is intended to be used in conjunction with this list of **Registration Districts of England and Wales** <https://goo.gl/XXYJip> **compiled by GENUKI** These pages show composition of the civil registration districts in England since 1837 to the present, and in Wales between 1837 and 1996. The same districts were also used to compile the decennial census for the years 1851 to 1911 ---.*

Free BMD Update <https://goo.gl/haAOz9>

Did you know that if you see an entry on Free BMD that you know is incorrect and you have documentary evidence, it is possible to add notes with the new information. A recent posting on Facebook tells of someone finding an envelope next to a family entry actually containing the correct marriage certificate. It is commented that "They are called "Postems", they have been on there for a long time but only show up if someone has added further details. To add go the glasses at the end of the entry and click on this. This next page allows you to add a postem. You can tell if an entry already has one as an envelope is shown. They are very few and far between

The Marriage Locator, Cracking the code of the GRO Marriage Index <https://goo.gl/EGbGv9> Guild of One Name Studies

"This website enables you to interpret the Marriage Index created by the General Register Office for England and Wales. By using it you can determine where your ancestors were married - not just which Registration District, but which church"

Re the National Library of Scotland <http://maps.nls.uk/> From Martin Briscoe, Fort William, martin@mbriscoe.me.uk

"I just been looking on the National Library of Scotland website and see that their 25" OS Map coverage now includes most of Lancashire. <https://goo.gl/mUvz7O> . Lots of other maps on their site, not just Scotland".
Thanks Martin

Railways Archive <https://goo.gl/yBFSCi>

"Welcome to the Railways Archive: a free online archive of documents charting the development of Britain's railways. If you are looking for key historical documents related to Britain's railways, you have come to the right place. Our archive contains acts of parliament, accident reports, publicity material, financial & economic reports, strategy documents, technical documents, white papers and more" –

Greater Manchester Libraries <https://goo.gl/1cSc8q>

I recently discovered that once subscribed to a local library service, (I am a member of both Manchester and Bolton libraries now <https://goo.gl/Z3pn3d> , and most locals can do this only needing a local postcode) , it is possible to freely access a wide variety of journals online. *"Free e-magazines available to members of libraries in Blackburn with Darwen, Bury, Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Stockport, Tameside and Trafford"*.

I followed this link to find the digital WDYTyr magazine, there available to read, plus past editions. Try it.

WORKSHOPS, COURSES and CLASSES

I am told there are still a few places left in the beginners' section of the new classes starting March 11th. Please contact Barbara Owen on 01204 309515 or email as above for more information.

THIS MONTHS LOCAL NEWS and SOME ORGANISATION UPDATES

Lancashire Records

Anfield Municipal Cemetery in Liverpool <https://goo.gl/cXqfUJ>

This site contains the contents of volumes compiled by Rob and Rose Anderson containing inscriptions from all accessible (and nearly all inaccessible) headstones at the cemetery. The volumes, completed in 2015, have been deposited at the record offices in Liverpool and Chester as a resource to support family history research



<http://goo.gl/I29JpL>



Lancs OPC <http://goo.gl/AN699Z> and left click on the "What's New" tab on the left

Encyclopaedia of Mining at LFHHS <https://goo.gl/I52v0L> **Chorley Family History Research Centre 28/1/2017**

"The Chorley Heritage Group has recently acquired a collection of 28 lever arch files containing an 'Encyclopaedia of Mining'. LFHHS Chorley Family History Research Centre agreed to give this wonderful resource a home in our Library" ---.

The History and Antiquities of Cumberland <https://goo.gl/iE4yh6> **In Collection California Digital Library** *The history of the county of Cumberland, and some places adjacent, from the earliest accounts to the present*

time: comprehending the local history of the county; its antiquities, the origin, genealogy, and present state of the principal families, with biographical notes; its mines, minerals, and plants, with other curiosities, either of nature or of art ..

by Hutchinson, William, 1732-1814 Published 1794

War Memorials Update

Well maybe some of you have become as confused as I have about the growing array of websites trying to collate the details re our disappearing war memorials. I have now had a chat with Julie Lamara our Bolton Archivist and she asks that if you find one in the Bolton area that you think might be at risk or been missed in the first assessment, please could you take photos, and make a note of position, surroundings, ownership and condition etc. and pass these on to Julie at Tel: 01204 332194 Julie.lamara@bolton.gov.uk. She will liaise with the Imperial War Museum <https://goo.gl/633i0x>, and I am now told that her department will also pass same on to the national War Memorials Index <https://goo.gl/T5sJkg>. If you see one elsewhere on your travels though just go straight to the WMI.



SOME INTERESTING, USEFUL, AND MAINLY FREE WEBSITES

Bolton Revisited - A People's History <https://goo.gl/8zNPAM>

I was recently directed to this site after reading a fascinating article on Facebook by Jacqui Kilcoyne entitled "What War?" <https://goo.gl/2bmZdE> which gives her childhood memories of life during WW2 in Bolton, and there are loads more stories like this. Enjoy.

1841 Census of Great Britain, Occupations <https://goo.gl/L2hC7o> **A vision of Britain between 1801 and 2001.**

Including maps, statistical trends and historical descriptions. See also

Obscure Old English Census Occupations <https://goo.gl/sxLqWk> **World Through the Lens** (some other interesting books about local events here as well <https://goo.gl/z6ldWm> . Copyright © 1995 www.worldthroughthelens.com United Kingdom. All Rights Reserved. Email: support@worldthroughthelens.com

Historical Directories of England & Wales <https://goo.gl/GwoM1d> A collection of digitised trade directories, part of the University of Leicester's Special Collections Online, covering England and Wales from the 1760s to the 1910s

Oxford Dictionary of National Biography <https://goo.gl/XUhZ3P> Those of us who attend Rita Greenwoods classes on Thursday will have heard Arthur Clemmett's wonderful story about his engineer ancestor Joseph Clemmett <https://goo.gl/3gVN2k> . This is the website he referred to. I have managed to gain access via my Manchester Library card, but not by the Bolton one so far. Similarly, another of our classmates Marion Hunt has this about her ancestor Janet Ionn nee Taylor, <https://goo.gl/Jo09Wh> teacher of navigation and supplier of nautical instruments. More on this story next month. I think we might be asking for autographs next.

Some Heath Stuff

A History of Epidemics in Britain <https://goo.gl/OVGTWv> Compiled for MonGenes by J. Doe, with additional material by Jeff Coleman:

"County Asylums List". <https://goo.gl/APa5xW> **The About County Asylums Blog**

"In 1914 there were over one hundred thousand patients within over one hundred mental institutions around the United Kingdom, most these institutions were built since the passing of the County Asylum / Lunacy Act in 1845---"

Can I access the medical records (health records) of someone who has died? <http://www.nhs.uk/chq/pages/access-to-medical-or-health-records-of-someone-who-has-died.aspx> If you want to see the health records of someone who has died, you can apply in writing to the record holder under the Access to Health Records Act (1990)

More Burial Stuff

Parish Coffins from “Curious tales of Old East Yorkshire, Howard Peach” <https://goo.gl/BvnXF3>

Few burials have been done on the cheap, though as we have seen, delays have bought time. An arrangement once widely used was the Parish Coffin, which conveyed the enshrouded corpse to the graveside, and afterwards returned back to the church. Few of these coffins have survived, but one example, dated 1664 rests in Saltmarshe Chantry, Howden Minster. Another is at Easingwold Parish Church, North Yorkshire, also



Concerning Coffins <https://goo.gl/vLL6ll>

“The use of the coffin may be traced back to a remote period. The remains of Joseph were conveyed in a coffin from Egypt to Canaan. The Christians adopted their use from the heathen” ---

“Generally speaking, the modes of burying the dead in the Middle ages were without coffins. The corpses were usually enveloped in linen, but members of religious houses were usually buried in the habit of their order. Coffins, in their universal use in this country, comparatively speaking, belong to modern times.

Thomas Hearne, the antiquary, writing in 1742, says that sixty years before that period it was a common custom to bury the dead without coffins” ---“The poor were usually buried in parish coffins, or rather taken from their humble homes to the grave in a coffin, and at the grave removed from it and merely interred in their shrouds”. Also, see

Pauper's coffin, Old High Church, Church Street, Inverness - See more at: <https://goo.gl/KNmkek>

When dead bodies were brought into the pub <https://goo.gl/Yle8H6> By Nottingham Post | Posted: April 11, 2015

Nottinghamshire historian Carol Lovejoy looks at how inquests have changed - especially with regards to the pub. *“Firstly, the criteria has changed slightly from 150 years ago. At that time, candidates for the role had to be land owners and of the legal profession. Now our coroners can also be from the medical profession and there is no requirement to be a property owner. --- (also) candidates no longer have to undergo public election for the post, either. Overall, we have a more professional system now.”*

MISCELLANEOUS

THE TRANSCRIBING AND INDEXING PROJECT ARTICLE 3

Well we have seen introductions and explanations in the last two 2017 newsletters, of Lancs BMD and Free BMD, from local people involved with them as volunteers, now we have a Boltonian “stray” equally involved and in a managerial role, from the antipodes discussing Lancashire OPC



Graham Holt suggested I contact you with some explanation about how LAN-OPC works. I can't speak for all of the county, but I am the Area Coordinator for what were the old ecclesiastic parishes of Bolton-le-Moors, Deane, Leigh & Wigan.

First the comment which I believe comes from another recent speaker – “the transcribers know nothing about Lancashire”. *Speaking for myself, I was born in Westleigh at the now demolished Firs Maternity Hospital and my home town was nearby Atherton where my mother's family have roots going back as far as I can trace into the early 1700s. I lived in Atherton full-time till leaving for Leeds University. I attended Bolton School from 1952-1959, often cycling to and from school via Hulton Lane and Deane Clough past Deane Parish Church. My father's family were originally “Billingers” and he met my mother when they both worked*

at Wigan Mining & Technical College prior to WW2. I often used to visit my Wood grandparents at Far Moor in south Orrell. I spoke Lancashire dialect as a boy on Hag Fold Estate and can still speak it "in my head" though I would now probably struggle to keep up with a dialect conversation back in Lancashire. My wife (a Devonian) and I left for New Zealand in 1968 but I have made many trips "back home", the last being a year ago, to attend my brother's funeral: he lived in Over Hulton just north of Atherton. All transcriptions contain errors (I have even found them in LanCS Parish Register Soc. transcripts) but we do our best to avoid them and if an error is reported to us we check and if confirmed correct the online record.

I hope this goes some way towards mitigating certain reported deprecatory comments.

One specific item of my LAN-OPC work that has pleased me most has been the Pretoria Pit disaster site on our Westhoughton parish pages. (see below) I grew up just on the Atherton side of the Over Hulton boundary and the Pretoria Pit ruins and rucks were a favourite playground. I worked closely with Pam Clarke of Westhoughton Local History Group to gather information about the 344 disaster victims and I believe our site is the best documentation of the victims of any British mining disaster. To conclude I'd say that my Lancashire credentials are adequate for the job in hand. Most, if not all of my team of transcribers are Lancashire born & bred.

About the quality of LOPC transcriptions.

*If you mean by "double checking" two people transcribing the same register then comparing the transcriptions and rationalising differences, then no, we do not double check. We are a volunteer organisation and do not have the members to spare for that. However, LAN-OPC does have a very rigorous set of checking programs designed for a range of register types.

*For Christian and surnames every name is checked against entries in two name files: the cname file contains >20,000 Christian names and variants and the sname file contains some 153,000 surnames and variants. If a transcribed name does not match a name in these files a warning is flagged and the transcription has to be rechecked against the register image. However, if the transcriber has entered say Paul instead of Saul then it will not be flagged. To assist people who are using our Search facility we try to match obscure renderings of a name with a name recorded in our names lists. For instance, there are 157 variants of the name Mollineux but none are spelt Molinox. If I came across such a spelling I would match it with Mollineux so it would be found by anyone searching using one of the existing variants.

*All dates are checked for obvious typos, dates out of sequence, baptised-before-born, buried-before-died, etc. Names missing where expected are flagged and checked. Male/female names in the wrong place are flagged and checked (eg 'Mary son of' would not pass muster).

*I do manual spelling checks on all abodes and occupations – by now my personalised computer dictionary has a huge number of Lancashire-specific spellings and variants. I check all spelling "errors" against the register images and if I find an apparently aberrant abode or occupation I check online to try and validate. We transcribe all information in the register entry and if this requires a note to elucidate an obscure entry or where say additional data or corrections are recording in the margin, I check the transcriber's note for accuracy.

*After completing my check of the transcriber's work, I send the transcript (which is in Excel *.csv format) to one of our Quality Control people who does a final run through looking for items I may have missed and who decides whether a "new" name should be added to names list or not.

*If we are transcribing MIs (gravestones etc) I do double check all entries against the photograph.

Yours Peter Wood, Rotorua, New Zealand

OTHER LOCAL SOCIETIES NEWS



Halliwell Local History Society <http://goo.gl/8erYyr> . Email margaretk@talktalk.net . Meetings are usually held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm, at St Luke's Church, Chorley Old Road, BL1 3BE opposite Shepherd Cross St, Bolton,

28th March 'The Bolton Massacre' – What happened in Bolton during the Civil War. An illustrated talk by David Casserly. (NB David is also coming to tell us about the same thing in June so you have two chances for this)



Turton Local History Society <https://goo.gl/PHNXiA> originated in the early 1970s when the students at a local history course at the Barlow Institute decided to start their own organisation.

Since then the Society has published 36 booklets, all in A5 format, some up to 130 pages long but most others considerably smaller. They are all about historical aspects of the area that once comprised the old Urban District of Turton and we are now holding a small stock of their well-researched collection. Researchers looking at locations such as Bradshaw, Edgworth, Harwood, Entwistle, Quarlton and Longworth and family names such as Ainsworth, Ashworth, Barlow, Bradshaw, Brandwood, Bridge, Bromiley, Entwistle, Greenhalgh, Hamer, Hardcastle, Haslam, Haworth, Heaton, Holt, Horrocks, Isherwood, Kay, Knowles, Lomax, Orrell, Ramsden, Scowcroft, Smith and Wood, should be particularly interested. If you would like one of these books posted out to you in the UK please add £2.00 packaging and postage to the price and send a cheque to Bolton Family History Society, 3 e, Hardcastle Gardens, Bolton BL2 4NZ with the address you would like the book posted to. Delivery should be within 14 days. At present we are unable to supply customers outside the UK but these and other Turton publications can also be purchased on Amazon. This next month's event

Wednesday 22nd March - Solving the Solar System (Fred Horridge), start at 7.30pm at Longsight Methodist Community Hall, BL2 3HX "when Fred will explore how mankind has discovered the solar system over the last 2000 years, and our increase in knowledge and understanding of Earth's "cosmic neighbourhood". From the Greeks to the modern day"

Westhoughton Local History Group – <http://goo.gl/XNugl5> Meetings take place on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, between 10am and 12md in the room above Westhoughton Library, Market St, Westhoughton, BL5 3AU. Next meetings

Thursday 16th March, Rivington Gardens: Elaine Taylor

Thursday 6th April, Thieves, Forgers & Luddites - Lancaster: Martin Baggoley
Castle Executions in the Bloody Code Era

NB. Wednesday 8th March – Saturday 11th at St Michaels Church Hall, Shaw St, WN1 5TQ, We have been asked to advertise a play by the Willpower Theatre Company, "Under the Canopy of Heaven", 7.30pm and 2.30pm Saturday £8 adults, £5 concessions. Contact 01942 745082. They are offering a *"special performance of the story of the Luddites in our area and the tragic burning of Westhoughton Mill."* I am told *"They have done a lot of research on the subject with the actual transcriptions from the trial and it will be a spectacular production with a cast of 50 in authentic costumes and original music written specially for the production"*.

Horwich Heritage Centre- <http://goo.gl/fSPsij> Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm at the Horwich Resource Centre, Beaumont Road (off Longworth Road), Horwich BL6 7BG. Open Days, are held most months on Saturdays between 10am --- 1pm with the next one



March 11th 2017 10 years of Horwich Heritage Centre Open Day/Exhibition 10am -1pm recalling some of the many events & exhibitions we have staged during that time. Admission is free and we hope that as many of your members as possible will come and join us, next meeting

March 14th 2017 Donna Hughes - "Life & Times of Samuel Crompton

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