



Bolton's Genies

The Monthly Newsletter of the Bolton Family History Society

Edition 126 – November 2024



**They shall not grow old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.**

Sourced by Ron Cole

Editorial Musings

How exciting, at long last, we have found a new venue. Bolton Golf Club is pleasant and a touch swish. However the noise interference from the bar adjacent to our meeting space and the threat of having to move to the much smaller room interfered with the smooth operation of our group. Details of our move to Great Lever and Farnworth Golf Club are included below.

The programme for 2025 is published. Jane Milne has, yet again, found interesting speakers covering informative topics. More information is included below. Thank you, Jane.

Finally, congratulations to all those involved in the Rock Hall project. The hard work and commitment is beginning to pay off.

Best wishes
Cath Cole

BFHS's New Venue

From January 2025 our new regular venue will be Great Lever and Farnworth Golf Club, Plodder Lane, Farnworth, Bolton BL4 0LQ.



Sourced by Graham Holt

Programme of Meetings for 2025

Wed 8 January	The Rise and Fall of The Town That Vanished, Bolton Lancashire's Biggest Mill Town.
Speaker	Ian Robinson
Wed 5 February	Manchester, Bolton and Lancashire Portraits: Key Figures from the Region's Past
Speaker	Brian Groom
Wed 5 March	Donald Higson, Bolton's Hero of Telemark
Speaker	Dr. Bruce A Tocher
Wed 2 April	Artificial Intelligence and the effects on family photography.
Speaker	Steve Gill
Wed 7 May	Lower Brazley Hall and the Ainsworth's of Bolton
Speaker	Derek Cartwright
Wed 4 June	Red Moss Girl, Bolton's own Bog Body
Speaker	Maggie Simms

All meetings start at 7.30pm. The Meeting Room is on first floor and there is a stairlift available.

Talks are usually provided by a visiting speaker but occasionally speakers may deliver their talks by zoom. This happens when the speaker, who is known to be a first-rate expert in their field, is based some distance from Bolton. Those present at the golf club and zoomers will see our speaker streamed on screen. It is not necessary to book a place to attend the golf club in person but it is essential to book for a zoom place at <https://www.mfhs.uk/bolton/events>. The link will be emailed to you several times. Zoom details will be sent on the morning of the meeting to those who have booked.

Speakers have been arranged for the whole of 2025. Details are on the website at <https://mfhs.uk/bolton/events/meetings>

Any changes will be announced on our Facebook page (link <https://www.facebook.com/BoltonFHS> accessible without subscription) and in this newsletter. It is always advisable to check before leaving home that the event is as previously advertised.

Meetings are on the first Wednesday of most months. The golf club opens for roomers at 7.00 pm for a 7.30 pm start and zoomers can sign in from 7.15 pm.

Eventbrite can be reached via the following link:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-future-of-family-history-bolton-fhs-tickets-925096898727?aff=oddtcreator>

Members of MLFHS – free, Non-Members of MLFHS - £5.00

Meetings from other branches of the MLFHS are available and free to all members. These meetings, like ours, may be live, zoomed or hybrid.

<https://www.mlfhs.uk/> is the link for events.

Information and Updates for Members

Methodists

In this month's *Who Do You Think You Are?* Jonathan Scott recommends sites for researching followers of Methodism. Most methodist records are available via the main commercial websites: Ancestry, FindMyPast and The Genealogist. There are several other links:

www.mymethodisthistory.org.uk – contains information about the denomination's history since 1932.

www.myunitedmethodists.org.uk – includes a WWI Roll of Honour and the Wesleyan Methodist Historic Roll naming one million donors to the Million Guinea Fund between 1899 and 1904

www.library.manchester.ac.uk/rylands - this is home to Methodist Archives and Research Centre since 1977. It contains the world's largest collection of circuit plans up to 1933 including names of itinerant and local preachers. It also holds marriage registers from Methodist chapels or missions and district records as well as information on ministers and their families. Also included are archives of three ministerial training colleges in Birmingham, Manchester and Richmond.

www.theleys-digitalheritage.net/default.aspx - The Leys school was founded in 1875 to educate the sons of methodist ministers. The site provides searchable access to magazines and other publications from 1876-1975.

www.methodistschools.org.uk/about-us/about-mist - contains similar information about most of the historic schools in England and Wales.

www.methodistheritage.org.uk – this includes the Church's own general introduction to Methodist history. Its *Researching Family History* page links to baptismal registers searchable online.

www.microform.digital/boa/collections/91/the-methodist-recorder-1861-1919 - this includes obituaries of preachers and can be accessed by purchasing a week-long single-user licence costing £20

www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk – includes 18,000 pages from the *Methodist Times* which was established in 1885.

Sourced by Ron Cole

Scottish Civil Death Records

Chris Paton in this month's *Who Do You Think You Are?* explains a wealth of detail available from the death of a Scottish ancestor.

<http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/> – historic records older than 50 years are available to view on this site – each image costs £1.50. For more recent events, certified copies are available at £12 per certificate

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/visit - all records to the present day, bar the most recent year, can be viewed on this website – the day search fee is £15

www.nrscotland.gov.uk/research/local-family-history-centres - gives information about local family history sites in Kilmarnock, Alloa, Hawick, Inverness and Glasgow. More centres are planned.

www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/help-and-support/guides/statutory-register-deaths - this guide explains Scottish statutory death records, including the Register of Corrected Entries.

www.tinyurl.com/guc-scot-way - this website of the Centre for the History of Medicine at the University of Glasgow explains why a statutory system for registering deaths was introduced.

Sourced by Ron Cole

Can You Help?

The Royal Horticultural Society is asking for help in identifying 16 Victorian *cartes de visite* or calling cards. The RHS has published a set of unidentified cards from its collection. If you can identify any of the men in the photos, please email

libraryenquirieslondon@rhs.org.uk

The set of unidentified cards can be viewed at

www.collections.rhs.org.uk/browse/collection/194517

The RHS has published a larger collection of 756 cards where the subject's identity is known – these can be seen at www.tinyurl.com/rhs-cartes-named

Sourced by Ron Cole

Society of Genealogists

Have you joined? Look on their website: www.sog.org.uk/join

Standard membership: £85 per annum

Gold membership: £150 per annum

Gold Monthly Membership: £15 per month

Sourced by Ron Cole

Family Tree Maker

Here is an offer from FTM

https://www.mackiev.com/offers/ftm2019/upgrade_promo.html?edition=uk&fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTEAAR0Tc6jiZK4guETC2KWaDHhnFgsUPbW-hOgoQBI-Wfv3ERLWGJEaLk9xphg_aem_wrCt8gIxmafep9jSOy9vBQ

Sourced by Jane Milne

Can You Help Again? - Free UK Genealogy

Paul Hunter is a researcher at Free UK Genealogy who is helping their team improve its service. He is conducting a small study about family history research and needs help. If you are interested in family history research, have a computer with internet access and can spare 45 minutes with a researcher, then please complete the eligibility questions via the link: <https://eu.jotform.com/form/242912891673364>. He will then be in touch to schedule an online meeting.

Sourced by Jane Milne

Rock Hall, Farnworth

There is progress on this project which Bolton FHS has supported.

Thomas Bonsor Crompton, b 20 May 1792 in Farnworth , probably in Vale House, Farnworth, died 8 September 1858 at the residence of Thomas DelaRue Esq, the Hassels, Sandy, Bedfordshire.

Thomas invented a new paper drying process , patented in 1821, which brought cheap paper made from rags to the masses. He was from a papermaking dynasty and his father John built Rock Hall, just above the family home of Vale House, Farnworth, on the Croal river bank next to Farnworth Paper Mill. The Hall was completed the same year John Sr died in 1807. John's widow Elizabeth Bonsor, Thomas's mother, lived there until her death in 1823. Thomas's older brother John who then headed the business, probably also lived there briefly with his wife, another Elizabeth, from Eccles. They had no children and we know he enjoyed game shooting with his brothers. He died on a health trip in 1834 in Wiesbaden. His wife returned to Eccles where she died in 1841. In the census of that year, only the gardener was living at Rock Hall with Thomas living next door in a cottage with his wife Jane and nephew William. Thomas seems to have been managing the business and he moved into Rock Hall once the required periods of mourning were completed. Thus began a fascinating story of a Farnworth lad who did very well for himself and the area.

The local charity, Banana Enterprise Network, and Bolton Council have begun repairs on Rock Hall – follow the link for details:

<https://tinyurl.com/mrym4tev> .

The project will develop the building as a community centre, offering education of the local industrial history with a museum and making the most of the natural resources of the area. There will be a cafe and much more once the renovation is completed, subject to successful funding.

Sourced by Jane Milne

Recent Events

November Meeting

CWGC Architecture and its Conservation

Date: **Wednesday 6 November 2024**

Speaker: **Andrew Smethurst**

Andrew Smethurst is ex military and has also driven coaches all over the UK and Europe for 20+ years. He is interested in history, especially WW1 and WW2. Andrew has been doing CWGC talks for 3 years and has also been a tour guide for battlefield tours for a number of years.

Andrew spoke of how he became involved in the work of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission maintaining a list of graves, leading battlefield tours and giving talks. Although tendency is to think of war graves on the European continent, the CWGC is responsible for graves in 150 countries and is funded by six member governments: UK, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India and South Africa. There are estimated to be 935,000 casualties, almost 212,000 unidentified. The CWGC has 1,200 staff. Some graves are cared for by families, some by communities, e.g. in Arnhem, Netherlands, schoolchildren originally helped care for the casualties and lit candles for the dead.

During WWI, Fabian Ware, a former civil servant and journalist, who was too old to fight, became commander of a mobile Red Cross Unit and began recording and caring for all the graves that were found. In 1915, in response to his lobbying, the War Graves Registration Unit was formed from his unit and incorporated into the British Army. In 1917, The Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC) was established by Royal Charter, with Ware as Vice-Chairman. It was renamed the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in 1960. Initially work involved searching for and identifying the missing personnel and moving graves to larger cemeteries but as the IWGC, it was tasked with formalising the cemeteries and creating memorials to the missing and maintaining these sites in perpetuity.

There are 2,000 "Constructed" cemeteries, created to a consistent design, from Tyne Cot in Belgium (11,900 graves and 35,000 names on memorials) to Ocracoke Island, North Carolina, USA (graves of 4 sailors who died when their trawler was torpedoed in May 1942).

There are about 306,000 War dead commemorated in the UK in 13,000 locations, often a single grave in a churchyard. The CWGC, through a host of volunteers, checks on the cleanliness, damage and legibility of these markers.

The overall design principles were developed by Sir Frederic Kenyon, Director of the British Museum. He was tasked with writing a report setting out how the cemeteries abroad would be designed. Kenyon provided the overarching principles of the Commission, the common architectural layout and the design features.

The 'central feature' to be included in each cemetery was a 'War Cross' designed by Reginald Blomfield and a 'War Stone' designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens. These features can now be found in cemeteries around the world. Typically, each is surrounded by stone, or brick walls, with wrought iron gates. The cemetery name is engraved into the stone at the entrance. Most sites, along with the iconic features, also have a bronze register box which contains the inventory of burials and a plan of the plots and rows. The "War Stone" is typically simple, a 3.5m X 1.5m stone on a shallow stone step inscribed with a Kipling quote "Their Name Liveth for Evermore". The War Cross, or "Cross of Sacrifice" designed by Blomfield with short horizontal arms, is adorned with a bronze sword and sits on an octagonal plinth. The design allowed for flexibility in size and can be found in different areas of the cemetery, although it is typically the focal point. The 1.1 million CWGC headstones, in 33 different styles and made of 25 different types of stone, based on local availability, are of similar size and look. They are engraved in a standard layout to include the following: Regimental Unit or Service badge; Regimental Number, Rank, Name and Service; date of death and age; a religious emblem; and Personal Inscription. Next of kin were invited to choose an inscription. Family were required to pay, however, and not all were able to afford the required funds.

In addition to the common features, the principal architects (Lutyens, Blomfield, and Sir Herbert Baker) were required to design the actual cemeteries. Andrew showed examples of the work of each (Tyne Cot, Menin Gate and Thiepval are some of the most famous). Not all cemeteries are like the famous larger sites. For instance, at Hunter's Cemetery, created by the Army, holding the graves of 41 who died at the Somme, a large shell hole was used to create a mass grave. Despite its small size, it includes the standard features of the enclosing wall, Stone and Cross. Plantings that would thrive in each location were also added.

After the Second World War, new cemeteries and graves were needed and new architects were appointed. Sir Hubert Worthington was responsible for Egypt and North Africa. Some of his best known are El Alamein War Cemetery (containing more than 7,000 graves), and Heliopolis War Cemetery in Egypt.

Philip Hepworth was assigned North-West Europe and created designs for cemeteries in France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. Notably he designed cemeteries in Dunkirk and Bayeux.

Sir Edward Maufe designed United Kingdom cemeteries including the Air Forces Memorial at Cooper's Hill, and extensions to the Tower Hill Memorial. There was also a need for cemeteries in other parts of the world, including Asia. In 1957, Colin St Clair Oakes designed the Singapore Memorial within Kranji War Cemetery. It commemorates the names of over 24,000 casualties of the Commonwealth land and air forces who have no known grave. The design symbolizes the all the armed forces: the

columns stand like regiments of the army; the 'wings' across the top denote the wings of an aircraft; and the rising central 'fin' represents the conning tower of a submarine. After the War, the Commission chose Louis de Soissons to design most of the Second World War Cemeteries in Italy. Generally, his Cemetery designs incorporate the use of stone paving inlaid with pebbles. An example of his design style is Cassino War Cemetery. This site contains 4,271 burials and commemorations. Inside, the Cassino Memorial (which commemorates 4,039 casualties, including cremated Indian casualties and other Commonwealth soldiers whose graves were not found). The feature includes 12 name-bearing stelae and a large water feature set inside de Soissons' typical inlaid paving. This water feature acts as a 'reflecting pool' for contemplation.

New cemeteries are still being created. In 2009, Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery was created for the remains of 250 casualties. It was in a hexagonal layout, both to incorporate ground conditions but to also create a visual impact from the entrance and from the platform containing the Cross of Sacrifice. The entrance feature was inspired by classic entrance features seen in historical French and Belgian Commission sites, with the whole surrounded by a familiar brickwork wall topped with limestone coping. The Cemetery was dedicated in 2010; it was the first new CWGC Cemetery built in 50 years.

Conservation is a big part of the work of the Commission as well as new burials (eight this year). Many of the sites are over 100 years old. This work is carried out by a global Operations Team. The landscape around many sites has changed (Andrew showed a photo of Sai Wan War cemetery in Hong Kong, whose backdrop of mountains has now been obscured by development). The cemetery is safe in perpetuity because of War Graves agreements between the host countries and the Commission.

Andrew related examples of a number of other threats to the cemeteries and graves. Natural forces such as extreme weather due to climate change can create flooding, cause damage and make sites difficult to access. Vandalism such as graffiti, fire or knocking over headstones and unrest including war can result in closed sites which cannot be maintained.

In undertaking conservation work, the aim is to use original materials if possible. Frequent projects include rebuilding walls or other features when cement has been incorrectly used. Another is restoring cemetery features that have been altered to their original form. Use of acrylic paint or oils over original designs is another area where conservation is needed as these paints seal the surface and can cause moisture and organic matter to build up underneath. Damaged sculpture and re-carving of headstones that have become illegible (3,500/year, are carved in situ) are other constant needs as is replacing badly damaged headstones. An important part of conservation is replacing only when necessary and using like-for-like materials. Some materials are no longer available (e.g. Hopton Wood) and similar ones must be found. Sustainable plantings at each cemetery are another important part of the Commission's work. More than half of the 1,750 acres of ground under the Commission's control is given over to fine horticulture, making maintenance a year-round task for 900 gardeners. Climate change will require adaptation and replacement. They are committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, protecting biodiversity and reducing resource consumption and waste.

The CWGC has a searchable database accessed from their website, containing information on the Commissions history, policies, activities and casualty records. It is also possible to find war dead and where they are buried (<https://www.cwgc.org/>). In addition, new memorials are still being designed and built (for instance in Sierra Leone).

Several Questions were asked when Andrew had finished his presentation:

Does the CWGC look after German war cemeteries also? These are taken care of by the German Government.

Is the Commission responsible for Czech and Polish cemeteries? They are. Also, African and others from WW1. There is a monument to the Polish Airforce outside London and the Hellas Memorial (to the entire Gallipoli campaign) in Turkey.

Please Note that a record of this talk (and all previous talks) is available for members on the MLFHS website. Members have to log-in find the Bolton Branch and click on 'Newsletter'

Non-members can go to the MLFHS website

Click on 'Branches'

Highlight 'Bolton'

Click on 'Newsletter'

Scroll down to 'Bolton Newsletter Sign Up'

Enter your 'Name and Email address'

Click on 'SIGN UP'

Each Newsletter contains a report of that month's talk.

Please note: All events are subject to last minute changes due to circumstances beyond our control. Please check our monthly Newsletter and Facebook page for any last minute changes, as that is the only way we can contact people.

Upcoming Events

December Meeting

The December meeting will be a social evening for members and non-members of MLFHS. There will be a raffle, a quiz and a pie supper - meat and potato or cheese and onion. There will be no speaker and no zoom.

PLEASE NOTE - **This will be our last meeting at Bolton Golf Club.** In January we will be moving to Great Lever and Farnworth Golf Club. Further information is given above

Speakers for 2025 are now available. Click on the link:

<https://mlfhs.uk/bolton/events/meetings>

Bolton History Centre and Bolton Records

Bolton History Centre is now open in the Central Library.

The telephone number for any local history and archive queries and requests for material is 01204 332185 or send an email request to archives@bolton.gov.uk Bolton Archives and Local Studies Service aim to answer all enquiries within 10 working days.

The service can carry out 20 minutes of research free of charge. More detailed research may be carried out for a fee, this is dependent on staff capacity. Please refer to our website for charges, opening times and full details of our services: [History Centre – Bolton Libraries and Museums \(boltonlams.co.uk\)](http://boltonlams.co.uk)

A list of freelance Record Agents who can undertake more in-depth research is available at [Record agents | Research service for archives and local history | Manchester City Council](#)

In person visits to Bolton History Centre to view our digital resources can be made without appointment.

Visits to view archives and local studies material require at least 7 days notice to enable transfer of material from stores.

Access information about our local studies collections here (selecting Local Studies from the drop down menu):

<https://bolton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/HOME>

Access to the archive collections here (select "Search Other Archives" from bottom of page and enter Bolton Archives and Local Studies):

<https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/advanced-search>

References to some of the websites:

<https://boltonremembers.org/> has some of the WW1 & WW2 records we have found for Bolton military personnel born, resided, or enlisted in Bolton.

<https://bolton.spydus.co.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/MSGTRN/WPAC/HOME>

This following link is the History Centre page for the services that are offered to researchers. It gives some information about archives and the records that are held. <https://www.boltonlams.co.uk/history-centre-1>

An interesting website sourced by Bolton News – “Unclaimed estates in Bolton revealed by HM’s Treasury Department” Here are the links to October and November:

<https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/23899893.treasury-reveals-november-unclaimed-estates-bolton>

<https://www.theboltonnews.co.uk/news/23823549.treasury-reveals-october-unclaimed-estates-bolton/?ref=suit>

Lancashire Records

News from The Archives



Lancashire Archives News and Events - their latest newsletter and more - follow the link:

<https://sway.cloud.microsoft/ugDIBB8KOPN6QeuI?ref=Link>



Lancashire Archives Facebook page -

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

Lancashire Parish Register Society link - www.lprs.org.uk

Lancashire Online Parish Clerk - follow the link www.lan-opc.org.uk

Lancashire Infantry Museum link - www.tinyurl.com/lancs-inf-mus

Activities and Events from MLFHS Branches



Please note these events are all free to subscribed MLFHS members, £5 to guests.



Manchester Branch

Next meeting – There is no meeting in December 2024.



Oldham and District Branch

There is no meeting planned for December 2024



Anglo Scottish Branch

Next meeting – Saturday 7 December 2024 at 2.00 pm in Manchester Central Library. "Seasonal Meeting". Booking on Eventbrite. This is a Members Only Meeting and is free.

Other Local History Societies' Meetings

WE ADVISE CHECKING THEIR RESPECTIVE WEBSITES PERIODICALLY FOR UPDATES AND DATES OF MEETINGS.



Halliwell Local History Society <http://goo.gl/8erYyr>

Email: enquiries@halliwell-lhs.co.uk

Next meeting – There is no meeting in December 2024.



Turton Local History Society <https://goo.gl/adx4GM>

Next meeting – There is no meeting in December 2024.

Email: mlandypublishing@yahoo.co.uk

Westhoughton Local History Group – <http://goo.gl/XNugI5>

Next meeting – There is no meeting in December 2024



Horwich Heritage Centre - <http://goo.gl/fSPsij>

Next meeting - Tuesday 10 December 2024 at 7.30 pm – “Christmas Event with Happy Voices Choir” at Horwich Community Centre.

Key Information about Bolton Family History Society

- Website: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton>
- Speaker Bookings: boltonprog@mlfhs.org.uk
- Genies enquiries: boltongenies@mlfhs.org.uk
- Bolton helpdesk: boltonfhishelp@gmail.com
- Newsletter Archives since July 2014:
<https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/newsletter/archives>
- General Society enquiries to the BFHS Secretary, Christine M Ellis
bolton@mlfhs.org.uk
- Manchester Research - email a brief enquiry to <https://www.mlfhs.uk/virtual-help-desk>
or visit us at
- Bolton Facebook page <https://goo.gl/n99qtW> 976 Likes and 1K people following on Facebook
- Bolton Research Collection on the MLFHS website: (For members only)
<https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/research>
- Join the MLFHS/BFHS at: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/join>
