

MLFHS Family History Help Desk Report for AGM 2024

Happy 10th Anniversary to us! It is hard to believe that The Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society Help Desk is now entering its 10th year of operation at Manchester Central Library. During that time the Society's Help Desk team has continued to provide an exemplarily service to both members and non-members and has firmly established itself as an integral part of the Archives + Partnership.

During the recent Archives + 10-year anniversary event in March, Cllr Yasmine Dar the Lord Mayor of Manchester, attended to present 14 of our Help Desk volunteers with certificates and 10-year badges to acknowledge their achievements on the MLFHS Family History Help Desk...there was cake too! It was a lovely afternoon and so nice to be able to say a special 'thank you' to so many of our Help Desk volunteers.

Inevitably there have been some changes to the team over time, and during the past year and we have had to bid a sad farewell to some of our teammates. However, we have also been able to welcome two new members, ensuring that the team stays strong with 26 volunteers on the rota.

We've generally had a busy twelve months with our visitor numbers remaining high, but they have still not returned to pre-covid levels. Feedback back from visitors remains positive with comments such as 'brilliant', 'great tips', 'excellent', and 'amazing team' all gratefully received.

A delivery of new computers to the library at the beginning of the year has been a welcome treat for the team and for our many visitors. This ensures that they can have the best possible research experience when they visit. Free access to the 1921 census continues to make it a firm favourite, alongside recently published Greater Manchester datasets on Rate books and Electoral registers which are also found on Findmypast.

I hope that members would again agree that our Help Desk volunteers deserve a huge 'Thank You' for the continuing generous amount of time, energy, and expertise that they provide to the Society's Family History Help Desk.

Leslie Turner
MLFHS Help Desk Co-ordinator