

# M&LFHS Newsletter

The monthly newsletter of the  
Manchester & Lancashire Family  
History Society



## April 2024 Issue 48

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## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

March was a very busy month for the Society with an event marking our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary in which we showcased our progress during those 60 years.

Thank you to the film archives for supplying film of the 1960s and to Archives for displaying material relating to recent projects, namely Horwich Locomotive Works employees records, Pepperdine funeral directors and Manchester School for the Deaf. Also on display was the collection of Zion letters and examples from the Museum of Transport, Greater Manchester employees records. More details in the Chairman's report.

April will be no different, not only will the branches continue with their event programme of talks but on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> April we are hosting our 3<sup>rd</sup> Family History Fair at Manchester Central Library. If you intend to be in Manchester on this day then why not pop in. There are upwards of 18 societies and organisations eager to explain their link to family history. See you there.

The Manchester Histories Festival 2024 will be held in June and more details can be found later in this newsletter.

I cannot close without mentioning two members, Richard Rossington, Judith Sellers, Andrew Smith and Frances Harwood, who between them donated some 100 BMD certificates. These will be added to our collection in due course.

The help desk have been equipped with new computers and screens so why not drop in and talk to our help desk volunteers. You never know, you may even be able to break down one of those brick walls.

Barry

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

Lasting Legacies...

Our event on 13<sup>th</sup> March to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Society went well and was graced by the ad hoc visit by our Patron the Lord Mayor, who came near the end of the proceedings when many had already departed. I took the opportunity to present a book [her personal selection from our book stall] to the Lord Mayor.



Elsewhere, our daily Helpdesk was busy [fed by visitors to our birthday party] and we had a good attendance in the Performance Space. It was a pleasant change to engage with members and others in the less constricted atmosphere of a Get-Together rather than a regimented set of talks. We must do more of these.

Aside from our book stall, there were other attractions to engage visitors – a display of our project work including documents from the archives provided by Manchester Archives, some nibbles, several background films of Manchester in times past provided by our A+ partners, the North-West Film Archive and a short presentation by me highlighting the key moments in our history. This seemed to stimulate some memories among visiting members, who spoke enthusiastically to me about various aspects of it.

Researching our archives for this event brought to light some hitherto unconsidered gems. These included the treasury of our Resource Cabinets near the Helpdesk Area on the Ground Floor of Central Library.

Among the documents squirrelled away over 60 years were a host of Family History pedigrees completed and submitted to the Society. These are housed in the Resource Cabinets and the Family Names are searchable in the online Resource Catalogue. Members can access any Family History File by asking at the Helpdesk.

The Resource Cabinets also hold the rump of the Society's once extensive library. Older members may recall that lack of shelf space forced us to auction off the vast majority of our library prior to our transfer to the re-furbished Central Library in 2014. However, we continue to hold many interesting books, maps and CDs covering Church Records, Monumental Inscriptions, Occupations and Military records. Members interested in Scottish and Irish ancestors will benefit from our large collection of themed material. Why not take a look at the online Resource Catalogue – follow the link on the Members' page at <https://www.mlfhs>.

...And Lasting Loyalties

Hard on the Society's 60<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations came the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the re-opening of Manchester Central Library after its multi-million pound refurbishment supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. An event to mark the date took place on Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>, hosted by the Archives+ partners, with the Lord Mayor in attendance. And there was a cake, addressed by the Lord Mayor and civic leaders in the company of several groups of school children on a planned visit to the library as well as a large number of adult visitors.



MLFHS can be especially proud that the Lord Mayor presented specially designed badges and a commemorative certificate to the longest serving members of our daily Helpdesk service to recognise their loyalty, commitment and continuous service over the 10 year period. [I ought to add that several of the 14 recipients of the award can claim much longer service with the Helpdesk, which began in 2007 in the old Local Studies Library.]

The Trustees and the Society generally are naturally very proud of the devotion of so many of our members to a most unique public service in our sector. But we must remember that we have other members whose service is just as long in many of our other

activities. More power to their elbow.

Our anniversary year is not yet over and we have our Annual Family History Fair to look forward to in April, before other events until the end of the year. All concerned are enjoying a very busy yet pleasurable few months.

David

## EVENTS/TALKS

### Manchester Branch



### Our Annual Spring Fair Returns to the Library!

Date: Saturday April 2024, 10.00am - 3.00pm

Venue: Manchester Central Library

Speaker: Lord Mayor of Manchester (tbc)

Booking: open event

No admission charge

Back by popular demand - our spring fair returns to the library!

Ideally situated at the beautiful central library in St Peter's Square, Manchester, with a tram stop right outside, this is the perfect opportunity to see what we have to offer to family historians and genealogists. Not content with that, we will once again fill the Performance Space area with stalls and displays from other societies and organisations in the area.

If you are not already one of our members, why not join the society on the day? The commonly used phrase, at the moment, is that volunteers are the backbone of our society - this is the place to get involved!

We look forward to seeing you at this open event.

Image: hh

Further Explore talks for 2024:

25<sup>th</sup> May - The 1921 Census

28<sup>th</sup> September - Two Sisters - Emigration to New Zealand

23<sup>rd</sup> November - Validating your Research Records

Full details of Manchester meetings <https://mlfhs.uk/manchester/events>

## Bolton Branch



Henry Dawson's presentation album and T Taylor Ltd of Bolton

Date: 3 April 2024

Wednesday 7.30pm

Bolton Golf Club & Online via Zoom To be confirmed

Booking: In-person at Bolton Golf Club (no booking required)

Speaker: Maggy Simm

Booking: Online via Zoom [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) to be confirm

Maggy Simm - Maggy is a retired teacher and has been involved in local history for many years, and latterly a member of the u3a. Following one of her u3a local history talks, fellow u3a member Jenny Mitton got in touch concerning an heirloom in the form of an illuminated photo album, belonging to a late relative Henry Dawson. Jenny now lives out of the area, but would like to see the album included one day in Bolton's Archives. In the meantime, she allowed Maggy to photograph it and to invite Bolton Family History Society to look further into its background.

Please see this You Tube link for more detail. <https://tinyurl.com/fkz7udv3>

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.

Full details of Bolton Branch meetings <https://mlfhs.uk/bolton/events>

## Oldham Branch



Rear of Foxdenton Hall

### **Manorial Records of Chadderton: Foxdenton Hall; an illustrated presentation by Michael Lawson.**

Sat, 13 Apr 2024 14:00 - 15:30 BST

Online

The Presentation will be preceded by a brief Annual Meeting of the Branch. All are welcome to attend.

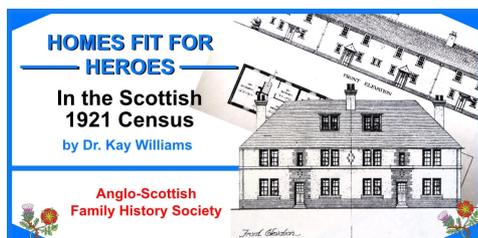
This is the story of an ancient Hall, built in the mid 15th century, and long associated with the Radcliffe family. The old Hall was pulled down and a new one erected in 1620. In 1922 the grounds were leased to Chadderton Council for use as a park and, in 1960, the Hall itself passed into the ownership the Council and was subsequently refurbished in 1965. This is a hybrid Meeting, on Zoom and in the Performance Space at Oldham Library. Booking here, on [Eventbrite](#), is only necessary for Zoom attendance and is Free to both members and non-members of MLFHS (aka Manchester Ancestors).

Please see the MLFHS, Oldham Branch pages on our website for more details.

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

Full details of Oldham Branch meetings <https://www.mlfhs.uk/oldham/events/meetings>

## Anglo-Scots



### **Homes Fit For Heroes - in the Scottish 1921 Census, by Dr Kay Williams**

Date: Saturday 6 April 2024, 2.00pm (UK time)

Venue: Online via Zoom

Booking: Will be on [Eventbrite](#)

Cost: members - free of charge

Cost: non-members - £5

Was your ancestor living in a brand-new council house in the Scottish 1921 census?

In November 1918 Prime Minister Lloyd George promised to make Britain a fit country for heroes to live in. The 1919 Acts which followed required local authorities to assess housing need and enabled them to provide homes subsidised by central government. Many of the council schemes built were low-density developments influenced by Garden City ideas. This talk takes a look at some examples of homes built under Scotland's 1919 Act at the time of the 1921 census.

Kay Williams has a doctoral degree in urban historical geography. She has returned to historical research in retirement following many years working in learning development in higher education.

[The Past and Other Places](#)

[Resource List for this talk](#)

This meeting will be held online via Zoom.

Full details for the Anglo-Scots Branch meetings <https://mlfhs.uk/anglo-scots/events>

### **Manchester Histories Festival 2024 #MHF2024**

Share your story on stage, book a stall, apply for an early/emerging artist commission...  
**Open Call to Get Involved NOW!** [bit.ly/OpenCallMHF2024](https://bit.ly/OpenCallMHF2024)

Get Involved in Manchester Histories Festival 2024: 6-9 June

**Be on stage.** Do you know something about history that we don't? We all have a story to tell, and histories to share. It could be fascinating, obscure, amusing, geeky, absurd, random, kind, entertaining, or extraordinary. We invite you to take part in the 'R Histories Open Mic Extravaganza' as part of Manchester Histories Festival on Friday 7 and Saturday 8 June 2024 at Manchester Central Library. You will get 10 minutes on the stage to perform, play, show, sing, speak, tell, or dance your piece of history that you are passionate about. You must be at least 16 years old to take part. To find out more and how to apply [follow this link to Manchester Histories website](#). **Deadline Friday 29 March 2024.**

Obviously you are more than welcome to get involved if you fancy it! If you have any questions please do ask.

Many thanks and best wishes,  
Janine Hague  
Project Manager  
0161 306 1982 |  
Registered Charity No.1151944

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Share your story on stage, book a stall, apply for an early/emerging artist commission...  
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### **The National Archives**

Our exciting programme of online talks is for everyone and delivered by experts, specialists and special guest speakers. When you book an event, you are invited to pay what you can – this is optional and entirely at the discretion of attendees. Some of our events remain completely free.

The National Archives also hosts a range of onsite events. To browse these, please see [Events at Kew](#) page.

Get priority booking to all events every month when you subscribe to the weekly newsletter. Get priority booking – sign up to the [mailing list](#) now.

[On the Record](#) is our podcast featuring specialists from The National Archives and guests. Each episode unearths the real life stories found in our vast collections.

Discover tales of propaganda, protest, and the everyday people of the past.

## BOOKSHOP

The latest in our series of catholic baptism register downloads is now in the MLFHS shop.

### **Pendleton, St. Sebastian (RC) Baptisms 1892-1918**

This can be found at

<https://www.mlfhs-shop.co.uk/collections/new-products/products/dl1693>

This download includes name index, transcript and images of the original register and contains 11,427 names which appear in 2,724 baptisms.

### **St. Mary & St. Philip Neri RC Church, Baptisms 1886-1913**

This can be found at <https://www.mlfhs-shop.co.uk/products/dl1692>

This download also includes the single surviving page of the first baptism register for this church (the rest lost as a result of damp) covering some baptisms 23 Oct 1864-9 Jul 1865.

Thanks are due to Marie Collier and her indexing team for this latest publications.

Just added is a new download to the MLFHS online shop. This is a scanned copy of a book originally published by the Catholic Family History Society but which has for some time been out of print. It contains lists of pupils for the following Catholic girls' colleges and periods: Ghent, 1624-1794, Preston, 1795-1811, Caverswall, 1811-1853. and Oulton, 1853-1969. They are presented as a PDF file and include alphabetical and numeric indexes.

Further details can be found at:

<https://www.mlfhs-shop.co.uk/collections/new-products/products/dlc0001>

John Marsen

## PROJECTS UPDATE

**Great Database.** This is a list of 1,183 persons present in the Bolton, Fletcher Street Workhouse 1820-1833, originally transcribed by Julie Lamara.

The records give age, occupation or condition, and the date on which they were recorded as present.

Added the latest batch containing 399 records of staff records for Manchester Corporation Transport, covering surnames BOWMAN to BRACKEN. Thanks to Barry Henshall and team for these.

### **Memorial Inscription index**

Added details of 55 memorials and an index of 200 names to the Memorial Inscription index. These are for Croft Unitarian Chapel and were supplied by Cheyenne Bower, to whom, many thanks.

## HELPDESK

### MLFHS Helpdesk Update:

"The Society's Family History Help Desk continues to be a firm favourite with visitors to Manchester Central Library. We continue to offer FREE assistance to members and non members Monday - Friday 10:30-3:30. The queries are wide ranging and the visitor feedback is always great: "Informative, helpful, personable", "super helpful", "a great facility", "very helpful volunteers". We are located behind the café on the ground floor of Manchester Central Library. No booking is necessary - just drop in. We look forward to seeing you". Oh, we have some new faster computers for you to try out.

## WEBSITE NEWS

### Who Do You Think You Are

**MyHeritage:** The MyHeritage Blog will keep you up-to-date. Why not drop by using this [link](#). There are 14 categories to search through and I am sure that you will find something of interest.

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**Family Tree:** Keep up to date with the latest happenings in the world of family history with Family Tree News & Views by following this [link](#).

You can also get the latest advice, opinion and updates from the Family Tree team and a range of genealogy experts, from in-depth guides to research and archives to the latest goings on at the Family Tree magazine HQ by following this [link](#).

\*\*\*\*\*

### Find my Past:

Added a brand new set of 220,7317 Scottish mental health institutional records this week, spanning 1858 to 1921.

Added over a million Scottish court database transcriptions to this existing collection, making it easier than ever to uncover those criminal connections within your family's history. These records are taken from the Court of Sessions, Crown Counsel Procedure Books and the Scottish Prison Records Index.

If your Scottish ancestor received Poor Law relief between 1845 and 1930, their name may appear within these 7,906 new records.

This week we added registers from Wigtownshire and the Scottish Borders to this existing collection, meaning it's easier than ever to locate your Scottish ancestors within our records.

Added five new titles to our newspaper archive this week. For anyone interested in Second World War history, the Prisoners of War News isn't to be missed - first published in November 1940, this British Red Cross publication was printed in Aberdeen. It details the names and other details of British soldiers who were held as prisoners of war in Germany. If you're having trouble finding your ancestor in [our traditional POW records](#), this title may help to fill in the gaps.

There is a wealth of information on the Find my Past website. Just follow these links

[Getting Started](#)

[Build Your Family Tree](#)

[Family Records](#)

[What's New?](#)

[Help Hub](#)

[Discoveries](#)

[History Hub](#)

[The Findmypast Community](#)

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## **Ancestry**

An Ancestry Blog can be found [here](#)

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## **The Genealogist:**

Released are over 1,769,000 individuals to our Irish Catholic Parish Record Collection, covering over 80 parishes in County Tipperary.

Also making up the releases in our "St Patrick's Day Parade" are over 1,263,000 Irish Wills.

Further news and articles can be found [here](#)

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## **FamilySearch:**

Finally why not try the FamilySearch [blog page](#).

## **ORPHAN BMDs**

If you have any BMDs you no longer want then why not consider dropping them off at our Helpdesk or you can send them to:

M&LFHS

61 Queens Road, Urmston, M41 9HF

If you wish to keep your certificates then you can send scans, preferably as a PDF to [office@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:office@mlfhs.org.uk) and they will be passed on to me. If you have problems sending scans to this address then please contact me at [newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@mlfhs.org.uk) and I will suggest an alternative means of forwarding the PDF files.

## **UKBMD UPDATES**

The Staffs BMD has been updated as follows ....

Births:

replaced to correct errors and add mother's maiden names

2,502 for Biddulph, registers at Newcastle-Under-Lyme (1893-1905)

2,000 for Norton, registers at Newcastle-Under-Lyme (1850-1860)

Births:

4,341 for Stoke, registers at Stoke-On-Trent (1964-1993)

Many Thanks to all our Volunteers

New data has been added at [www.lancashirebmd.org.uk](http://www.lancashirebmd.org.uk) as follows:

Added 1,942 Births for Bury RD comprising:  
Bury (1989-1990)

Added 2,604 Deaths for Bury RD comprising:  
Bury (1976-1979)

Added 2,355 Marriages for Bury RD comprising:  
Bury Register Office or Registrar Attended (1971-1974);  
Radcliffe Register Office or Registrar Attended (1960-1962);  
Whitefield, Whitefield Hebrew Congregation, Park Lane (1961-2022);  
Prestwich, Higher Prestwich Hebrew Congregation, Bury Old Rd. (1964-2019);  
Whitefield, Sha'arei Shalom North Manchester Reform Congregation, Elm St. (1983-2019);  
Prestwich, Sedgley Park Synagogue (L&D), Park View Rd. (1992-2018);  
Meade Hill, The United Synagogue and Beth Hamedrash Hagodol (1938-2004)  
Thanks are due to Tony Foster and his team.

John

\*\*\*\*\*

Kingston BMD has been updated to add:

Marriages:  
869 for Christ Church, New Malden, registers at Kingston (1954-1969)

Many thanks to the Register Office and their volunteers for these.

### **MANCHESTER ARCHIVES+**

Archives+ will offer a wonderful, purpose-built showcase and repository for the region's archive and family history. The Archives+ partnership will build on the appetite and demand for accessible community history and personal heritage. This one-stop-shop will make it easier than ever before to find what you're looking for.

The main partners in Archives+ are:

Manchester City Council - Libraries & Archives

– Greater Manchester County Record Office (Association of Greater Manchester Authorities)

– Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives (Manchester City Council)

– North West Film Archive (Manchester Metropolitan University)

– Ahmed Iqbal Ullah Race Archives and Community Engagement Trust (University of Manchester)

– Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society

– Manchester Registration Service (Historic Registers)

Manchester Histories.

Why not visit the Manchester Archives+ [website](#) where you can sign up for their Blog via e-mail and also delve into a huge collection of subjects. There are 25 categories to choose from.

Displays and exhibitions will explore the rich collections to tell the stories of Manchester's people and communities. You'll find all the local and family history resources you're used to,

from books, maps and original materials to self-service digitised items and online resources like ancestry.com.

Archives+ will bring history to life using interactive exhibits, sound and vision. Its focus will be on telling stories and helping us to identify with our past. Our history isn't just about the great and the good, it's about personal testimony from ordinary people: a child in the cotton mill, the navy, the land girl.

## **NORTH WEST SOUND HERITAGE**

Unlocking our Sound Heritage

Thousands of cassettes, open reels, CDs and MiniDiscs are sitting in archives, museums, libraries and in people's homes all over the UK. All kinds of unique live music, radio and conversation are recorded on these tapes and discs. We've already lost many of the people captured on them. And the British Library estimates that we have fifteen years to preserve the sounds themselves.

That's why the British Library has received funding from the National Lottery Heritage Fund to establish Unlocking Our Sound Heritage, an exciting new national project to save thousands sounds which are at risk of being lost forever.

Archives+ is the hub partner for the North West region, which covers Cheshire, Cumbria, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and Merseyside. We'll be digitising around 15,000 recordings on 5,000 cassettes, reels and optical discs held all over the region here at Manchester Central Library.

This is a fascinating site providing a flavour of times gone by. If you are a sword swallower then discover what not to eat and drink before a performance!

Follow on Twitter - [@archivesplus](#).

Find more information [here](#). Enter your email address to follow this blog and receive notifications of new posts by email.

## **NORTH WEST FILM ARCHIVE**

Welcome to the [North West Film Archive](#), the professionally recognised public home for the moving image heritage of the North West of England.

### **WHO WE ARE**

From historical footage and home movies to newsreels and adverts, we find, preserve and share over 50,000 items of film and video, for public, educational and professional use. We love film and how it can open a window into the past and the present in ways that can be powerful, moving and unexpected.

Part of Manchester Met, and based within Manchester Central Library's Archives+ partnership, we are a specialist resource dedicated to saving and growing our region's rich filmed history.

### **WHAT WE DO**

Do you need some footage for teaching, broadcasting or an artistic or community project? Do you have film of our region's people or places that needs looking after? Whoever you are, if you need a professional and friendly service, we're here to help.

We offer:

- research support and loan or licence of footage (including for professional broadcast)
- bespoke learning and teaching support
- opportunities to hire or watch unusual and interesting films, with a local and historical theme
- opportunities for community engagement and collaboration
- a home for the region's film and video, where moving images are professionally preserved, stored and made available, for now and for the future

This is a site well worth visiting The NWFA was set up in 1977 and preserves moving images made in or about Greater Manchester, Lancashire, Cheshire, Merseyside and Cumbria and offers a variety of access services to users in the public, academic and commercial sectors.

### SOCIETY CONTACTS

Website: - <https://www.mlfhs.uk>

Newsletter editor: - [newseditor@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:newseditor@mlfhs.org.uk)

Bookshop: - [bookshop@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:bookshop@mlfhs.org.uk)

MLFHS Office: - [office@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:office@mlfhs.org.uk)

The Manchester Genealogist: - [office@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:office@mlfhs.org.uk) or [editor@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@mlfhs.org.uk)

MLFHS mailing address: Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society,  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Manchester Central Library, St. Peters Square, Manchester, M2 5PD.

### SOCIETY BRANCHES

Oldham Branch of MLFHS - <https://www.mlfhs.uk/oldham>

Bolton Branch of MLFHS - <http://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton>

Anglo-Scottish Branch of MLFHS – <http://www.mlfhs.uk/anglo-scots>

### A MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL SECRETARY

The best and quickest way to contact the society is by emailing [office@mlfhs.org.uk](mailto:office@mlfhs.org.uk) we will then direct you to the relevant person to help you. Our phone is very rarely used.

If possible please use the on-line option on our new website to join or renew your subscription. We use Stripe but you can pay as a guest with your card if you wish.

Have you considered taking out a Bank Standing Order? It means you don't have to think about renewing and you can stop it at any time. Always include your membership number. We can always find it for you should you forget.

There is so much you can learn from our website it seems a shame that members don't make the most of it. From the members area on the website you can make changes to your address and email just log in. It is so easy.

We recently held a talk on how to get the best from the website which was very well received. We are looking at ways to bring this to everyone. Most people were amazed at just what was available on the site and I'm sure went home to try it all out.

If you must pay by cheque please send to:

MLFHS, 17 Fortycree Drive, Bredbury, SK6 2EZ

**DO NOT** send it to the office and we no longer take cash at the Helpdesk.

The Click and Collect is now available from our shop.

Best wishes

Elsie



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



and Twitter

M&L Family History@MLFH

As a response to one of our readers, we have included 2 more in-depth pages. One is a mini biography of the first person buried at Weaste Cemetery, Joseph Brotherton MP and the other page is about the exploits of the 7-man crew of Lancaster bomber PB304 whose memorial stands at Agecroft Cemetery.

### **A Note from the Chairman. Paul Sherlock**

Welcome to the new 6-page, Spring 2024 Newsletter. I suppose, if one doesn't dwell on the somewhat monotonous routine of a typical English Winter, then it is easy to anticipate in January how things might unfold as the Spring approaches, but sometimes things don't go to plan. Well for starters, after trying to get to grip with various issues that were expected to occupy us for our first committee meeting in January, we had to cancel it, partially because I caught a chest infection and couldn't make it, and the weather turned nasty as well.

Fortunately, most of the activities for which we need to plan won't take place until after our April committee meeting, so we can pick up the pieces then, but it does mean that I can't yet give you any confirmed dates for any Walkabouts or open days from March onwards. As our next Newsletter is scheduled for June, the best place for information will be on our Facebook site. It does seem unlikely that we'll have such an event in March, even though we did originally have something possibly pencilled in for that month. There will be changes in Cemetery Management taking place in March and it's perhaps unwise to plan an outdoor event, because the weather can still be a bit unpredictable that early in the year. If you recall last year's March walkabout was rained off.

What we will be doing is having a stall at the Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society Family History Fair on Saturday 13th April 2024 at Manchester Central Library, so if you are attending that, do pop in and see us. Also our A.G.M. is scheduled for Tuesday 21st May at 7 pm.

There is something new to report. Although we haven't yet had chance to discuss it at committee, we have become involved in a scheme from the Manchester Cemeteries to make provision for a joint cycle trail connecting our four cemeteries and four of theirs. I have attended a couple of meetings at Philips Park Cemetery together with our managers and things seem to be moving on at a pace. If you're into cycling, keep an eye out for further details. I hasten to add that I got there by public transport. Incidentally it has encouraged me to visit some other Manchester cemeteries recently which has helped me with my own research.

In my Winter 2023 letter I made a comment about reports being a bit "samey" and asked if members might like to see anything different. Pete received a response from Janette Robinson who suggested that we might include some fuller accounts about people and events, possibly from other members as well as the usual committee members. Thanks to Janette for responding.

## Cemetery News from Bereavement Services Manager, Barry Ellis.

As we approach spring, we are looking at new beginnings and big changes to our service. I am due to take early retirement at the end of March and Luke Smith will be taking up the role of the Bereavement Services Manager. Due to the training, mentoring, development, and the succession planning we have put in place over the last several years, we have been able to recruit in house to several posts and the team are in a strong position to meet the challenges ahead for the future. This will see Jacob Beaver and Janet Luis take the roles as Bereavement Services Officers.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the Friends of Salford Cemeteries Trust for the support you have all given me while I have been in the post of Bereavement Services Manager. It has been a pleasure to work alongside you all. The work you have carried out as volunteers and the time and dedication you have all shown to promote the heritage and history of all our sites is a credit to you all. There are some exciting projects already in the pipeline for this year with the proposal for Salford City Council Bereavement Services and the Friends of Salford Cemeteries Trust to work in partnership with the Friends of Phillips Park Cemetery and Manchester City Council Bereavement Services on a cycle route which has been proposed and will take in 8 cemeteries across Salford and Manchester. Blackley Cemetery, Phillips Park Cemetery, Gorton Cemetery and Southern Cemetery in Manchester and Weaste Cemetery, Peel Green Cemetery, Swinton Cemetery and Agecroft Cemetery in Salford.

This is a great initiative originated by Gail Spelman from the Friends of Phillips Park Cemetery which will complement the "Cycle More in 24" project. It is hoped this cycle route will help to promote the heritage and history of all four cemetery sites in Salford. I think this is a great opportunity for us to replicate the already very successful heritage trail in Weaste Cemetery, in Agecroft, Peel Green and Swinton Cemeteries.

We have also been informed that our application for S106 monies has now been accepted for Weaste Cemetery and it is hoped that the improvement works will start later this year. The works will include updating and adding to the heritage trail, resurfacing the main driveway and footpath, installing new signs and notice boards, and introducing meadow wildflower and bulb areas. As you will all be aware Weaste Cemetery is a Grade II listed site and recognised as one of three registered historic parks and gardens in Salford. The other two being Buile Hill Park and Peel Park. All the works planned will be carried out with this in mind and it is hoped that on completion we can look at gaining the Green Flag award for the site in 2025, to join Agecroft and Peel Green as a Green Flag site. By working together in the future we can continue to promote the wonderful heritage and history of all our cemetery sites.

### Buried at Weaste Cemetery: Joseph Brotherton, MP. (1783 – 1857)

Joseph Brotherton is considered to be Salford's founding father, its first MP, and Minister of the Bible Christian Church for 40 years. When he died in 1857, he was the first person to be buried at Weaste Cemetery.

Joseph was born on 22nd May 1783 at Whittington, near Chesterfield, the second son of John and Mary Brotherton, John was a Tax Collector and Schoolmaster and in 1789 moved to Manchester. In 1799, John formed a partnership with Joseph Harvey and set up a cotton

mill on Oldfield Road, Salford. Young Joseph Brotherton worked in the mill, becoming a partner in 1804 when he was 21. On 12th March 1805, Joseph married his cousin Martha Harvey at Whittington, Derbyshire. In 1810 Joseph's father died and Joseph became head of the enterprise, going into partnership with his brother William and cousin William Harvey to form the company Brothertons, Harvey and Co. In 1819, his brother William died, Joseph retired to become full-time Minister of the Bible Christian Church, and the company passed to William Harvey.

Joseph belonged to the Bible Christian Church in King Street, Salford. This new non-conformist movement was strictly vegetarian and abstained from alcohol and tobacco. Both Joseph and his wife Martha were extremely active members and in 1812 Martha wrote the first Vegetarian Cookery Book. In 1821 Joseph wrote the definitive "On Abstinence from Intoxicating Liquors" and in 1847 he chaired the meeting which established the Vegetarian Society.

In politics, Joseph was a Liberal and along with other members, played an active role in the formation of Salford Council in 1844. As a supporter of Parliamentary reform he became a member of a group of Liberal Non-conformists who used to meet at John Potter's home at Buile Hill, Pendleton. He strongly campaigned for a Parliamentary Inquiry into the 1819 Peterloo massacre and played an active role in the campaign against child labour in the textile industry. In 1830 his group of reformers pushed for two MPs for Manchester and one for Salford. The Reform Act of 1832 granted this and the voters of Salford elected him. As an MP, Joseph Brotherton supported factory legislation, the 10 hour day, repealing the Corn Laws, formation of local Councils, working class education, museums and libraries, public parks and cemeteries. He was an MP for 24 years and was very popular.

Joseph died suddenly on 7th January 1857 aged 73. He was travelling in a horse-drawn omnibus from his home in Pendleton with his Liberal friends Sir John Potter and Sir Elkanah Armitage, when he had a heart attack and died. His funeral was held on 14th January. Many thousands of people lined the route to the Cemetery and there were over 130 carriages in the cortege as well as many people walking. The service was held in the Dissenters chapel, read by Rev. William Metcalfe, Minister of the Bible Christian Church. The coffin was lowered into a vault in a portion that would become A3 Dissenters plot.

#### Some Interesting Cemetery Snippets from Jean Coward and Sue Tydd.

Agecroft Cemetery. Miss Annie Jelley died at the residence of her sister (Mrs Martha Farrar), 18 Teneriffe Street, Broughton on 11th February 1940 at the age of 72 years. She was born in Gumley, Leicestershire in 1868, the daughter of Eli Jelley (a Gas Manager) and his wife Emma. In 1881 (age 12) she was a Domestic Servant in Leicester. In 1901 Annie was a Confectioner at 31 Worsley Road, Eccles. In 1921 (age 54) she was resident at Cottage Homes, Culcheth, Lancashire, and in 1939 she resided with her sister at 18 Teneriffe Street. She was buried at Agecroft Cemetery, grave 31/CE/413 on 15th February 1940.

Peel Green Cemetery. John Eden of 20 Mitchell Street, Monton worked for Messrs Mitchell, Shackleton and Company of Monton. On the 9th September 1923 he had been on a works trip to Hoole Green, and on return he was dropped off in Patricroft shortly after 11 pm. Whilst walking back to his home in Monton, he crossed the road near St Gilbert's Church and was struck by a car. The driver stopped and found that John had a serious head injury,

and he died before the ambulance arrived. John was buried at Peel Green Cemetery, grave J/NC/13343 on 13th September 1923. He was 50 years of age.

Swinton Cemetery. Samuel Baxter was a Collier at Agecroft Colliery, owned by Messrs Andrew Knowles and Sons, when he was killed at work on 22nd April 1904. Whilst preparing to set a bar in a jig brow, 7 yards from the coal face in the Doe Seam, part of the roof collapsed on him and killed him instantly. Samuel lived at Staveacre, Pendlebury Road, Swinton. He was interred at Swinton Cemetery on 26th April, aged 33.

Weaste Cemetery. John Reuban Ledger (aged 61) lived at Salford Union Workhouse and decided to commit suicide by cutting his throat. He left a suicide note which was very lucid and logical, which said that he knew what he was doing. The Coroner had to advise the Jury that as John was of sane mind, he had actually murdered himself. He instructed the Jury to return a verdict of "felo de se" and he could not be given a Christian burial. (In days long gone by a "felo de se" would be buried at a crossroads with a stake through his body). On 5th April 1890, John was buried in a common grave in the Dissenters portion of Weaste Cemetery with funeral rites, but with no service in the chapel.

Agecroft Cemetery. John Edward Jones was for 50 years a Stone Mason with Pendleton Corporation Highways Department. He was born in Liverpool in 1852. In 1911 he was a widower and lived at 396 Liverpool Street, Pendleton with his son and two daughters. In 1915, John married Mary Sloane (widow) and in 1921 lived at 11 Springfield Road, Pendleton with Mary and her children. On 31st January 1933 he passed away peacefully at his daughter's residence, 2 Orchard Street, Greenheys Lane, Chorlton-on-Medlock aged 79 and was buried at Agecroft Cemetery, grave 15/NC/18, on 4th February 1933.

#### Lancaster Bomber Memorial at Agecroft Cemetery.

Lancaster bomber PB 304 was based at Metheringham in Lincolnshire as part of RAF 106 Squadron. Its seven man crew perished when the bomber crash-landed and exploded on the Irwell River bank near Agecroft Cemetery on 30th July 1944. The Friends of Salford Cemeteries Trust holds an annual Memorial Service on the Sunday closest to the 30th July to remember the crew members and two civilians who died. The bomber had a short, but active life.

Lancaster Bomber PB304 was built at Woodford, Cheshire, and was taken into service by Flight Lieutenant Lines and crew on 18th July 1944. Its first mission was part of a daylight attack on German troop positions east of the River Orne in Normandy, by a force totalling 1,056 bombers. But 19 Lancasters, including PB304, were diverted to bomb Mondville steelworks in the city of Caen. On the night of 19th July 1944, PB304 was one of 17 bombers that attacked the V1 flying bomb site at Thiverney (27 miles north of Paris).

Two further missions were on the night of 24th July to bomb fuel tanks near Saint-Nazaire and the following night to bomb St Cyr airfield and signal centre near Paris. PB304 was hit by flack and its rear gunner Sergeant Robert Saul was wounded and on landing he was taken to hospital. He was replaced by Sergeant Mohand Singh.

On the night of 26th July, PB304 bombed railway yards near Lyons. Then on 28th, it was on a raid into Germany bombing Stuttgart with 2,000 pounders and J type incendiaries.

The crew's last mission was a daylight bombing run on 30th July 1944 to support Allied troops fighting in Normandy. PB304 took off at 0600 hours to fly to Cahagnes, half way between Caen and St Lo. 106 Squadron provided 21 of the 462 Lancasters, 200 Halifaxes and 30 Mosquitos.

Bad weather over the target meant that 106 Squadron had to circle, whilst German anti-aircraft fire was intense. At about 0830 Hours 106 Squadron was told to return home still carrying bombs, but ordered not to jettison them over the Channel due to the high number of Allied ships there. PB304's route took it in a wide sweep around Blackpool, and whilst flying over Salford it began to lose height. Pilot Peter Lines appeared to be making for Littleton Road Playing Fields for an emergency landing, but it clipped houses in Regatta Street and crash-landed onto the river bank.

After a short delay there was a terrific explosion which killed all the crew and injured 70 local people. Two of the local people were to die later from their injuries. 45 year old Air Raid Warden George Morris suffered shrapnel injuries and died on 1st August, and 72 year old Lucy Bamford was injured by flying glass and died on 14th August 1944.

#### Unusual Gravestone Inscriptions at Weaste Cemetery, Graham Ramsden.

Edward (Eddie) Colman was one of the famous "Busby Babes" footballers for Manchester United. The gravestone inscription reads: "died in the Munich Air Disaster on February 6th 1958 aged 21 years." Eddie was born in Salford in 1936 and played for Salford schoolboys and Lancashire County Schoolboys whilst at Ordsall School. He was recruited by Manchester United in 1952 and turned professional in 1953. He played 107 games for United including 13 European matches. It was following the match against Red Star Belgrade that the team's aircraft put down at Munich Airport for refuelling. On leaving Munich it encountered slush on the runway and failed to take off, crashing at the end of the runway, killing 23 people including Eddie and 7 of his team mates.

Walter Jackson, the beloved son of Junior Stirzaker Jackson, who was killed at Rio Janeiro on June 29th 1889 whilst following his employment as a Jockey, aged 22 years. His brother Arthur Jackson, the beloved son of the above and devoted husband of Amelia Jackson of Kankakee, Illinois, USA, was killed at Mobile, Alabama, USA, 3rd January 1899, aged 28 years." (No further info).

Arthur Turner, son of Richard and Elizabeth Turner, who was drowned off the S.S.Loch Rannoch off Cape Vincent, 8th May 1891, aged 19. Nothing is known about this incident, but the S.S.Loch Rannoch was a three masted, iron ship, with screw propeller, built in Glasgow in 1868. She usually loaded with general cargo and passengers in Glasgow and made one trip per year to Melbourne, Australia, where she picked up wool and grain, usually for London. Cape St. Vincent is located at the south western tip of Portugal.

Sergeant John Thomas Tinkham Dilworth, son of John and Agnes Dilworth, met his death in a railway accident at Cairo, Egypt on 9th October 1914, in his 32nd year. John, of 18 Fleetwood Street, Salford, was a Journeyman Baker and enlisted in the 7th Battalion Manchester Regiment. On arrival in Cairo, the troops were disembarking from their train when another train crashed into it. Several Troops were injured and taken to hospital, where John's left arm was amputated. He died later of his injury.

Elizabeth Scott, aged 70, widow of John Charles Scott, and their son Frank Scott aged 42, were both killed by enemy action on 8th May 1941. They were at home at 1 Irwell Place, Eccles, during a WW2 German air raid. (Most of the victims of German bombing in Salford and Eccles were killed on the nights of 21st and 22nd December 1940).

Please visit and join our Facebook site: Friends of Salford Cemeteries Trust.

Also please visit our website: [www.WeasteHeritageTrail.co.uk](http://www.WeasteHeritageTrail.co.uk).

Deadline for the Summer Newsletter is 1st June 2024. [petekilvert@virginmedia.com](mailto:petekilvert@virginmedia.com).



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# Really Useful Bulletin

## THE ENGLISH ALMSHOUSE: A PERSPECTIVE ON PHILANTHROPY – Early Medieval England to the Eighteenth Century

by Dr Judy Hill

Almshouses originated in early medieval England as places that provided care for the sick poor and were usually attached to a monastery. Monasteries were obliged to distribute alms to the poor at the monastery gate. Hospitality was seen as an important Christian duty and the term hospital derives from the Latin word *hospitalis*

meaning concern with *hospites* or guests who need shelter particularly passing pilgrims. The original focus was on providing board and lodging for travellers and caring for aged and sick monks. In the seventh century the monastery of Whitby Yorkshire was described as having a building “to which they used to take those who were infirm or who seemed to be at the point of death” and this was extended in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries to include the care of sick or feeble lay people in a separate establishment. One of the oldest almshouse foundations still in existence is thought to be St Oswald’s Hospital in Worcester founded in c.990. The Bishop of Worcester, St Oswald created a hospital where the brothers could:

*Minister to the sick, bury the dead, relieve the poor and give shelter to travellers who arrived after the city gates were closed at night.*

*Minister to the sick, bury the dead, relieve the poor and give shelter to travellers who arrived after the city gates were closed at night.*

In addition, hospitals were established by non-monastic benefactors – the crown, clergymen, the aristocracy and gentry, urban livery companies, guilds and individual wealthy merchants. For example, in the late eleventh century Lanfranc, Archbishop of Canterbury, established St John’s Hospital in Canterbury to take on the long-time care of people who were too ill or disabled to care for themselves “oppressed by various kinds of infirmities.” Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent and Lord Chief Justice of England in 1227 founded the Mason Dieu in Dover. The original building was a large hall with a kitchen to give “hospitality to all strangers.” The hospital also accommodated permanent pensioners, poor and sick soldiers as well as pilgrims visiting Thomas à Becket’s tomb in Canterbury cathedral. The Hospital of St Cross Winchester was founded between 1132-1136 by Henry of Blois, monk, knight and politician, grandson of William the Conqueror and appointed Bishop of Winchester in 1129.

The hospital was to support thirteen poor men so frail they were unable to work and to feed one hundred men at the gate each day.

From the late fourteenth century, almshouses established by lay people were usually administered by a board of trustees. The trustees’ aims were the smooth running of the almshouse and administration of the endowment. The endowment of an almshouse was a highly visible form of charitable giving and required a substantial investment, the establishment of a trust and the construction or purchase of a suitable building. The presence of almshouse residents in their local communities was attractive to founders who wished to be remembered and honoured by posterity. Original trustees often included relatives of the founder, local clergymen and



other worthies of the parish. As the initial trustees died out, they were replaced with local dignitaries and clergy. These administrators could benefit by association from the founder’s status and reputation.

Almshouses intended for old people were relatively few in number before 1465 but by the late Middle Ages the number had increased. Both London and York had about thirty-five hospitals, Norwich fifteen, Exeter ten and Canterbury nine. The paucity of surviving records from the pre-Reformation period means that it is likely a number of hospitals went unrecorded, especially if they were small and had a short existence. Residences for the elderly poor that are characteristic of the modern almshouse evolved in the fifteenth century when English parishes played a fuller role in the relief of local elderly people who had fallen into poverty on account of their age or failing health. Parish fraternities increasingly accumulated stocks of land or animals, gave doles to the poor or established almshouses especially in market towns. Historians have revealed an upsurge in foundations after 1465 in eight southern and midland counties of Berkshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Leicestershire, Middlesex, Nottinghamshire and Suffolk. This upsurge in foundations at the time reflects the growing wealth of these areas.

It has been estimated there were over 500 almshouses on the eve of the Reformation and their number was reduced



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to half this by the mid-sixteenth century due to the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1536 and 1539 and subsequently in 1545 and 1547 when the Crown confiscated the property of chantries and some hospitals. Stand-alone hospitals and almshouses not attached to religious houses stood a better chance of survival. John Innocent, Master of St Cross Winchester in 1535, received a visitation from Dr Legh, one of Thomas Cromwell's commissioners, but St Cross avoided closure as it was a secular foundation. The survival of some almshouses was also as a result of the intervention of petitions from town or city corporations who wanted their local foundation to survive.

By the end of the sixteenth century the numbers of almshouses began to recover but the numbers were still lower than those of the 1520s. The establishment of the Elizabethan Poor Laws codified with the Acts of 1598-1601 established a clear legal obligation for parishes to deal with three broad classes of applicants for relief:

*The lame...the old, the blind and such other among them being poor and not able to work.*

The Acts also required poor children and orphans to be apprenticed and the able-bodied set to work. These Acts were important because they established a national framework for the provision of welfare in the parishes based on the levying of a property-based poor rate. Although poor law provision was highly irregular in most rural parishes well into the seventeenth century, it has been estimated by the end of the century, rate-based poor relief was providing three times as much relief as did private charity. By this time, it has been estimated about one in ten parishes possessed an almshouse. The urban distribution of almshouses by the eighteenth century shows a concentration of almshouses in towns of ancient foundations and towns which had enjoyed relatively large populations in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Of course, it must be recognized that there was substantial local variation in the availability of charitable funds financing almshouses. In recent years an increasing number of county and regional surveys have identified most of the well-established institutions. Our knowledge of these wealthier foundations is now much greater because some building and archival material has survived but, of course, these are not typical of all almshouses. Many very small foundations have not been identified; archive material has not survived due to their short existence.

Almshouses also received additional bequests or endowments over the years, possibly from donors who wished to be associated with such a visible form of charity. For example, at St Cross Winchester, Cardinal Beaufort created the Order of Noble Poverty in the mid-fifteenth century for thirty-five brethren and three sisters who were impoverished but of "gentle birth". For many almshouses, further endowments after their initial foundation were

essential for their long-term survival. Additional bequests or endowments from donors who wished to be associated with such visible good could also be taken as an indication that the almshouse and their inhabitants were held in high regard in the local community. For example,

the Perry Dawes

almshouse in Wotton-under-Edge Gloucestershire. The oldest part of the Hugh Perry foundation was funded by a legacy in the will of Hugh Perry, merchant and Alderman and of the City of London. He left £300 for almshouses to be laid with a garden and they were built in 1638 for six poor men and six poor women. In 1722 Thomas Dawes, another local man, left property and later the two almshouses were replaced with a general hospital founded by both Perry's and Dawes' trustees. By 1871 the almshouses had benefitted from additional bequests to provide money, bread and coal for residents.

Almshouses tended to cater for the "respectable poor" local residents who had fallen on hard times in old age, the "deserving poor." The terms of the endowment were important in determining who were to be given almshouse places. Admission to almshouses was determined by certain criteria including age, gender, income, disability, religion, demeanour. People were required to have a local settlement in order to qualify for admission to an almshouse. Admission criteria in some cases also detailed the type of person that was likely to be considered by the trustees worthy of admittance. The term "poor" was used often as a qualification for admittance and on occasions it was stated that applicants would not be considered if in receipt of Poor Law relief payments. Some almshouses had extensive lists of people to be excluded, for example those with faults such as drinking, gambling, fighting or scolding. The admittance criteria for St Helen's Almshouses in Ashby was very detailed; applicants were required to be *poor widows or widowers of good character who have been born in the parish of Ashby and who have not during the period of two years next preceding the time of their appointment received poor relief, and who from age, ill health or accident or infirmity are wholly or in part unable to maintain themselves by their own exertions*. Religion was clearly regarded as an important criterion by some founders; Bishop Duppa's Almshouses founded in 1661 for ten unmarried women over fifty years in Richmond insisted that the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments and the Apostles Creed were all recited in English by the candidate before admission.



*Hugh Perry foundation Wotton on the Edge Gloucestershire 1638*



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Rules and regulations concerning the almshouses also reflected the wishes of the founder; most of these were to control the lives of the almspeople within the almshouse to provide the smooth running of the establishment. The rules were administered by the overseer, clerk, superintendent, or master who would often live within the almshouse. George Abbot had firm ideas as to how his foundation, the Hospital of the Blessed Holy Trinity, should be run. The twelve brothers and eight sisters were placed under the care of a resident master whose duty it was to “rule and govern with mildness and love ...otherwise with moderate severity”. A requirement for all new residents was to sign the rules or to take an oath to keep the rules of the hospital. Residents could be expelled and the most common reasons for expulsion were committing crimes, disobeying the rules, misconduct and in some almshouses not wearing the almshouse gown (if required). More commonly almspeople would be admonished for not behaving in a respectable and morally upright manner. Francis Bancroft, who had been Lord Mayor of London, left £25,000 in his will to the Drapers’ Company to set up a school and hospital for only “deserving and real poor objects...of good life and conversation.” Bancroft’s hospital opened in 1736 on Mile End Road London. There were twenty-eight rules set out by the Drapers’ Company for the almsmen and their families to observe; breaking them resulted in an appearance before the Visiting Committee. In 1889 the school, but not the hospital, moved to Woodford Wells, Essex. It appears from the Drapers’ Company records there were many disciplinary problems including drunkenness, bickering and fighting among the thirty almsmen and their wives; this may have influenced the decision to close the almshouses when the hospital was demolished in 1884. Not all almshouses had such clear rules and regulations but the lack of rules and regulations regarding the administration of an endowment could have serious consequences. For example, Andrew Windsor’s Almshouses in Farnham, Surrey, founded in 1620 had few rules and regulations so on the death of the founder in 1625, there was a lengthy and costly court case to establish his unwritten wishes.

It must be recognised that almshouses conferred status for



*The Hospital of the Blessed Holy Trinity Guildford founded 1619*



*Charles Webb almshouses Capel Surrey 1871*

almshouse inmates within the local community. Some benefactors insisted that the residents wore a gown and badge whenever the residents left the almshouse so that they were identifiable and advertised the benefactor’s generosity. The brethren of the Hospital of St Cross who were members of the original foundation wore a black gown, a black trencher hat and a silver badge in the shape of the cross of Jerusalem. The brethren of the Order of Noble Poverty wore claret-red gowns,

claret-red trencher hats and a silver Cardinal’s badge as a reminder of their founder, Cardinal Henry Beaufort. Trinity Hospital Castle Rising, founded by Henry Howard, Earl of Northampton, was built 1609-1614 for twelve women of the parish; they were provided with red cloaks which were badged with an embroidered white lion on the breast of each cloak and conical hats. The sisters had to attend daily chapel, and attend St Lawrence Church every Sunday and on Holy Days dressed in their gowns and hats and say prayers for their founder whose badge they wore. Badges were important and were often worn as part of the ceremonial costume. The badges were very elaborate and effectively functioned as liveries. Wearing badges publicly represented the generosity of the benefactor and the gratitude of those who were proud to accept the charity. In some almshouses residents were also provided with everyday clothing; for example, the eight widows in the almshouse in Titchmarsh, Northampton were given a gown, apron, cap and handkerchief annually. By the nineteenth century clothing or provision of cloth became less common.

Of course the experience of almshouse life and the benefits that occupants received was variable. The great variation in benefits reflected the worth of the endowment. Their standard of living did not necessarily make almspeople a pauper elite and many aspects of their lives mirrored those

of other poor people, including parish paupers dependent on poor relief. Some provided residents with comfortable accommodation, a regular allowance, clothing and fuel. The master and twelve brethren of Lord Leicester’s Hospital, Warwick, founded in 1571, had an annual income of about £200 to share among themselves. Other foundations were very modest in their provision. For example, Thomas Oken’s almshouse in Warwick, founded in 1571, paid six almswomen one shilling a quarter.



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This was not sufficient and it is recorded the women had to apply for parish relief. Conversely, the brothers and sisters in Abbot's Hospital, Guildford in 1622 received two shillings and sixpence a week and in addition they were provided with coal, firewood and gowns. In his will dated 1630, Hugh Perry left funds for residents of his almshouse in Wotton-under-Edge; this included *their shoes, stockings, shirts and smocks; £5 a year for wood and coals; ...twenty shillings apiece for the almsfolk on the four usual feasts of the Church plus £12 a year for them*. It was also often possible for residents to receive additional payments by undertaking duties such as reading daily prayers and nursing sick residents. It has also been recognised that wealthy foundations more often supplied extras such as fuel, clothing, medical aid and covered funeral costs.

Almspeople did have advantages compared with other poor old people in the parish. They had the comfort and security of almshouse accommodation and some financial allowance, no matter how small. Unlike those who received parish poor relief, their allowances were not regularly assessed and they did not have the fear of being sent to the parish workhouse if the cost of their maintenance increased. An almsperson could only be removed from their room or lose their allowance if they persistently broke the almshouse rules. Admission to an almshouse was generally sought after and their status as "deserving poor" gave them a standing in the local community.

Medieval choices for hospital sites were clearly visible on main roads leading in and out of towns. This was crucial for fundraising although begging was not normally allowed since it would be demeaning to the founder's reputation. This continued post-Reformation; for example, Abbot's Hospital situated in Guildford High Street had an alms box in the main entrance. The name "hospital", widely used before the Reformation, was replaced by the term almshouse from about 1640. By the nineteenth century with population increase and industrialisation, their situation was less desirable for housing, so many were relocated. For example, Sir Thomas Gresham's eight almshouses were built in 1575 on Broad Street in the City of London; in 1768 the almshouses were demolished to make way for a new excise office and moved to Green Yard, Whitecross Street



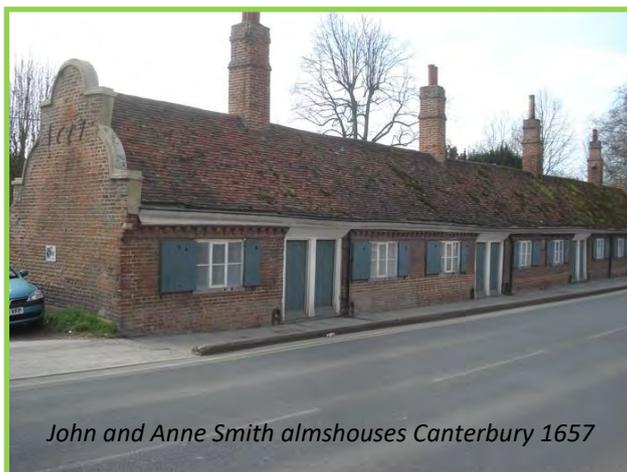
*Captain Henry Mudd of Ratcliffe donated the land to Trinity House almshouses London 1695*

which was alongside the City stables, where the Lord Mayor's coach was kept and where stray horses and cattle were housed. The place must have been full of noise and bustle, not to mention the smells and dirt. Later in the 1880s the residents' situation improved as the almshouses were moved to the then rural area of Brixton. In addition, almshouses were often purpose-built but the materials and resilience of the houses could vary considerably from stone and brick to examples from west Kent where the shortage of local brickmaking meant the almshouses were timber-framed and not very resistant to the elements. As a result,

many became dilapidated; for example, the hospital of St John in Canterbury, founded c.1087 for the poor aged and sick, survived 600 years but the medieval buildings were demolished c.1684. Almsmen then lived in small houses and in the nineteenth century the almshouse was rebuilt around a courtyard.

Over the centuries the design of almshouses has changed. In medieval times the long hall was a design typical of the period. This central space had beds down either side and a chapel at the far end so that the sick and inform could easily see the altar. This was important because care of the soul was just as significant as the care of the body. A good example is the thirteenth-century foundation of St Mary's in Chichester but this form of building ceased to be used by the time of the Reformation. By the fifteenth century there was a shift away from communal living with the construction of individual chambers. At St Cross Hospital, Winchester, Cardinal Beaufort's House of Noble Poverty constructed in 1445 provided residents with individual chambers for greater comfort and privacy. A retreat from communal living was mirrored by the introduction of monetary allowances for residents in lieu of the provision of shared meals. In some almshouses residents were still expected to eat in a communal dining hall as was the case at

St Cross. The courtyard design became popular in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as this could accommodate over twelve residents as part of a community. Examples include Abbot's Hospital, Guildford, founded in 1619 by Archbishop George Abbot and Whitgift Hospital, Croydon, founded in 1596 by Archbishop Whitgift. In general though, by far the most popular design was called *the row*; it was a single storey that



*John and Anne Smith almshouses Canterbury 1657*



# Really Useful Bulletin



*The Sisters Trinity Hospital  
Castle Rising Norfolk 1609 -1614  
Image: Richard Humphrey CC BY-SA 2.0 DEED*

could be built relatively cheaply and could be as plain or elaborate as the founder wished. At the centre of the building, there was often a clock or plaque recognising the benefactor. John and Anne Smith's almshouses built in 1657 in Canterbury are a good example of this row style; their row accommodated four poor men and four poor women. Charles Webb founded almshouses in Capel, Surrey in 1871, built in the same style; his row accommodated six aged couples.

Few famous architects have been commissioned to design almshouses; many were anonymous or were selected as the "local firm". The Royal Hospital Chelsea is an exception designed by Sir Christopher Wren for 412 residents, a Charles II foundation of 1682 for retired soldiers due to age and disability. The pensioners were housed in small rooms off long corridors, an echo of the long hall design of the medieval period. The very limited personal space was perhaps a reflection of military barracks. There were in addition large communal spaces, a sitting room, dining hall, chapel, library and garden. This design has now been changed to offer pensioners their own bedrooms, study space and en-suite shower room facilities.

This article set out to examine how almshouses originated in early medieval England as places that provided care for the sick poor and were usually attached to a monastery. Almshouses have been portrayed as institutions providing care and shelter for a small number of respectable privileged elderly poor people. Only recently have historians attempted a comprehensive survey of their existence and records and included almshouses as part of the range of poor relief provision provided in the parish to meet the needs of the poor. Almshouses played an integral part in the welfare provision provided by parishes in England and are important when considering the mixed economy of welfare. Almshouses have continued to exist and thrive into the nineteenth, twentieth and twenty-first centuries but that is another part of the story.

## References

Almshouse Association, [www.almshouses.org/](http://www.almshouses.org/)

County Record Offices are a good starting point.

*Victorian County History* : A History of (relevant county)

*White's History Gazetteer and Directory* (relevant county)

Unfortunately, for the early period  
not all records have survived.

*Part two covering post-1800 will come out later this year.*

## About the author:



Dr Judy Hill was elected member of the Royal Historical Society in 2007 and taught history at the University of Surrey. Now a freelance lecturer and researcher who lectures widely in Surrey and neighbouring counties to university groups, historical societies, Probus, WI, Society of Genealogists, Family History Societies and various other societies.

She has published on emigration from Britain in the nineteenth century and on poverty and unrest in England including the Swing Riots of 1830-32.

Judy is available as a speaker – Live or Zoom.

See [www.familyhistoryfederation.com/family-history-speaker-surrey-judith-hill](http://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/family-history-speaker-surrey-judith-hill) for some of her talks or email [judy@judyhill.co.uk](mailto:judy@judyhill.co.uk) for the complete listing.



# FAMILY HISTORY BOOKS

[www.familyhistorybooksonline.com](http://www.familyhistorybooksonline.com)

Visit the Federation's online bookshop for titles on most topics you will encounter during your family history research.

See the special book offer for Easter on page 9.



Join your local family history society—

full list at [www.familyhistoryfederation.com/societies-az](http://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/societies-az)



# Family History Societies



**Calderdale  
Family History Society**

## A further source of information from the recent past - Undertakers' Records

Many family history researchers are frustrated by the limitations put on them by GDPR and the inability to access records from the recent past. One of the sources of such information is from records concerning people who have passed away and are subsequently outside the jurisdiction of GDPR.

At Calderdale FHS we have been fortunate enough to have been given detailed records of funerals undertaken by a firm of local funeral directors dating from 1935 into the 1980s. We have transcribed over 10,000 of these records and added them to our society database, which is available online, free of charge, to our members. Additionally, there is an index entry for everyone on the transcription index on our society website [www.cfhsweb.com](http://www.cfhsweb.com) under the menu item "Research". This is available to everyone, along with nearly 2½ million other records we hold under numerous different headings.

Some of the other sets of data are monumental inscriptions and the burial records from Halifax's major cemetery, Stoney Royd, details of which go back to 1860. The transcription index neatly groups these entries together for an individual, so that it is easy to see where the records for that person are held.

Examination of all the different sources can reveal a much fuller picture than just from a single source. For instance, a monumental inscription for an individual may only give details of the family at the time the headstone was carved, whereas Stoney Royd records for that death may show parents and the funeral director records may show siblings, other relatives and even friends, with some addresses.



Picture from CFHS website

## Families in British India Society

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[www.fibis.org/25-years-conference](http://www.fibis.org/25-years-conference) or call 01932 761768

### Calderdale FHS continued...

In addition, the funeral records hold places and dates of death as well as those for burial or cremation, and also who was the responsible person at the time of death – often, but not always, a relative.

Finally, our society is able to retain the images of the records themselves – not always allowed by local archives who hold many of the historical files – and we offer our members the chance to have the image for any record of interest. From that, they can see information that we have not transcribed, due to it not being of direct genealogical concern. Items include type of coffin, what happened to the deceased's jewellery, who the account for payment was sent to and many other incidentals.

All this information is available to Calderdale FHS members free of charge for just their annual membership fee which starts at as little as £6pa. Membership can be gained either by direct application to our society or via [www.genfair.co.uk](http://www.genfair.co.uk) where purchase can be made by credit card.

Please visit our website for further details  
[www.cfhsweb.com/](http://www.cfhsweb.com/)

The Really Useful Bulletin welcomes contributions from all Federation member organisations.

It is opportunity to promote *your* society to the extensive Bulletin readership.



# Family History Societies



## Essex Society for Family History

Join the society in celebrating their **50th Anniversary!**

### 50 years of Researching Essex Ancestors

The celebrations will begin at Galleywood Heritage Centre on the 18 May with the Anniversary Roadshow with a *Then and Now* display. Members are invited to send in photos of the area they live in from the early 1970s and showing the same place this year for this display.

The grand finale will take place at the Keene Hall, Galleywood on the 21 September where Toni Neobard and Kate Broad's interactive family-history-themed murder mystery evening, *Where There's a Will*, will take place. Toni and Kate are established local playwrights, authors, and speakers. The performance is a comedy in three acts with interaction from the audience, who will be invited to bring their own refreshments. There will be a raffle and prize for the winning team guessing the murderer(s).

There will also be a *Genealogy Challenge Trail* for all our members from the UK and all over the world, with some great prizes. All you need to do is follow the genealogical clues to help solve a crime. Why not join Essex Society for Family History and take part.

Further details are on our website [www.esfh.org.uk](http://www.esfh.org.uk)

### Calendar of Events

Sat. 18 May	Galleywood	50th Anniversary Roadshow
Sat. 6 July	Westcliff-on-Sea	50th Anniversary Roadshow
Sat. 13 July	Colchester	50th Anniversary Roadshow
Sat. 4 Aug.	Harlow	50th Anniversary Roadshow
Sat. 21 Sept.	Galleywood	<i>Where there's a Will</i> : Family History Murder play

The Essex Society for Family History was formed in September 1974 in Chelmsford. Over the years the membership has grown from 200 to over 1,700. We have monthly meetings at our branches in NE Essex, SE Essex and West Essex as well as regular meetings at Galleywood Heritage Centre in Chelmsford.

Membership of the society starts from £8. Our website [www.esfh.org.uk](http://www.esfh.org.uk) gives further information about the society, our branches plus news and events. Becoming a member is easy and can be done via our website. Membership gives access to our genealogical database with over two million records available. You can add your surname interests and contact other members researching the same surnames as you. Many of our talks are recorded and can be viewed on the day or by using the zoom links in the members' area. Our magazine, the *Essex Family Historian*, is published three times a year and our newsletter is emailed to members monthly, keeping members up to date with latest events and press releases.



## Northamptonshire Family History Society

Northamptonshire FHS was founded in 1976 so we will be celebrating our Golden Anniversary in 2026 – although we have yet to decide what form this will take!

Like most societies, we hold monthly branch and zoom meetings with a wide range of speakers and topics. Zoom meetings, whilst not to everyone's liking, have become an established part of our monthly programmes. The benefit is that it allows our members from across the county, country and indeed overseas to join in and to be involved. We have recently issued a questionnaire to our members asking for their views on what the society presently offers, what they might like to see in the future and perhaps, more importantly, what they hope to gain from being a member of our society. We'll be sharing the results with our members once they've all been collated.

One of the society's main projects over a number of years has been the recording of the memorial inscriptions in the parish churchyards. Once the most recent batch come back from the printers, we shall have available 225 booklets of memorials from around the county. All of these are available via Parish Chest. Do have a look !



We are looking forward to attending the **FHF-Really Useful Show Live at St Ives on 20 April**. [See cover] It will be great to be out and about again, to meet up and to chat face-to-face with visitors. If you are researching Northamptonshire ancestors then do come and visit our stall!

In partnership with Discover Northamptonshire, the society is organizing a **Heritage Fair on Sunday 28 April at Wicksteed Park, Kettering**. We have a large and wide range of heritage organisations, heritage attractions and archives attending. Entrance is free.



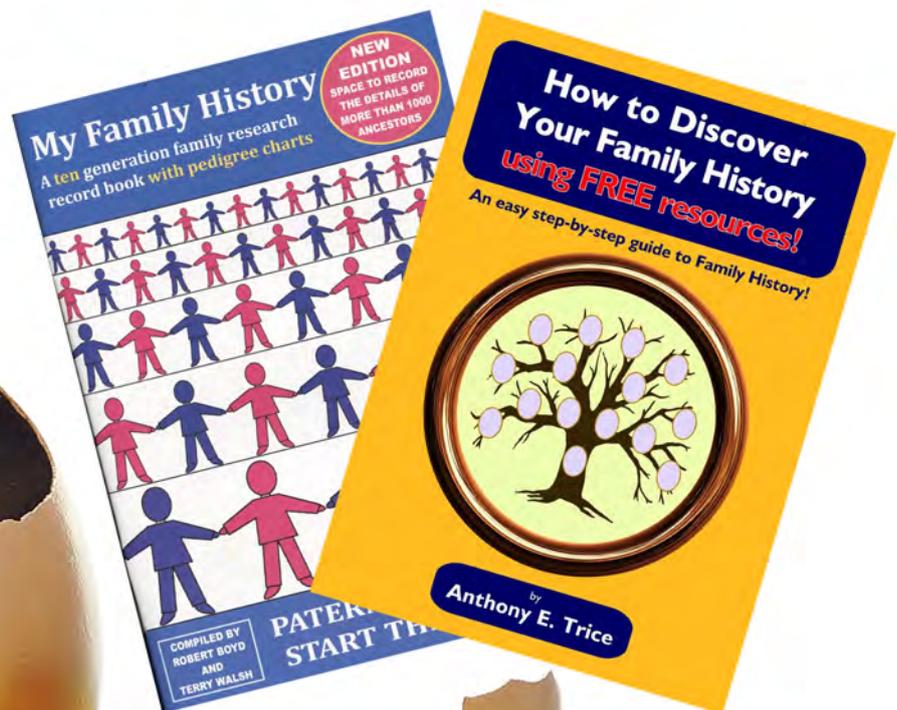
Please visit our website: [www.northants-fhs.org/](http://www.northants-fhs.org/)



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## EASTER GIFT



[www.familyhistorybooksonline.com](http://www.familyhistorybooksonline.com)

**These two books provide all the essentials!**

*How to Discover Your Family History Using FREE Resources* explains major free resources and how to manipulate them and your findings to develop your family tree—it can save you hundreds of pounds for online subscription websites!

*My Family History* is a record book covering ten generations. The large-format fold-out chart has every individual cross-referenced to their section in the book. Your record book can be carried with you, shared with those you meet and does not rely on connectivity when out and about!

**Plus, they will make a super gift to encourage a friend or relative to work on their family history!**



# Really Useful Bulletin

## News from the Federation

**Let's celebrate supporting the family history community for fifty years!**

**Join us for this celebratory day which includes the Federation's annual meeting**



**Saturday 11 May 2024**  
at  
**Wesley's Chapel and**  
**Leysian Mission,**  
**City Road, London EC1Y 1AU**

The day's proceedings will commence at 9.30am with coffee and registration.

At 10.00am there will be a welcome from the Federation's chairman, Steve Manning, after which everyone can enjoy a presentation by Janet Few, President of the Federation and a popular speaker on family and local history topics. Her presentation will be of interest to all involved with family history research.

After Janet's presentation, those representing member groups will move to another room for the formal meeting. For those not involved in voting, *FamilySearch* representatives will give a presentation on the extensive records now available online free for all to use.

Lunch—provided free only for all those who are registered—will be at 12.30pm followed by a presentation by Nick Barratt, past-President of the Federation and well-known for his research work and TV programmes. His talks are always informative.

Close to Wesley's Chapel and Leysian Mission is the famous Bunhill Fields Burial Ground. Following the afternoon talk, we have reserved a number of specialist guides who will escort small groups around the burial ground. This is available to all who register for the day. The tour will last ninety minutes or so. Learn more about Bunhill Fields [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunhill\\_Fields](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bunhill_Fields)



Voting representatives of member groups take priority on places until 31 March—but there will be plenty of space for friends to register to take part.

**If you would like to join the Federation for this free-of-charge special celebratory day with informative talks and the guided tour of Bunhill Fields, please register by emailing your name and address to [admin@familyhistoryfederation.com](mailto:admin@familyhistoryfederation.com) no later than Tuesday 30 April 2024.**

**Please put *Celebration* in the subject line of your email.**

**If places are oversubscribed on the closing date, names will be drawn at random and everyone notified.**



# Really Useful Bulletin

## More News from the Federation

### Out and About

It was lovely to meet so many family historians at the recent Creative Crafts show and also The Family History Show—Midlands. It was wonderful to have individuals returning to thank our volunteers for offering ideas to further their research, and a delight when one gentleman reported that the book *How to Discover Your Family History Using Free Resources* was excellent and did 'exactly what it said on the cover'! It makes all the hard work by our volunteers worthwhile



when individuals return to thank them!

*The Family History Show Midlands in Malvern—bookshop waiting for the doors to open!*

### MONEY, MONEY, MONEY...

When visiting fairs, shows and similar, please remember that there are societies and groups that do not have facilities to accept debit/credit cards. Also, not all venues have ATM cash dispensing facilities.

Please have real money with you so you are not disappointed by being unable to make your purchases.

### Comment

It is amazing how many people we meet at events who are plodding on alone with their family history and had never heard of family history societies, let alone one that may meet very close to their home!

We ask family history groups to use all local facilities available to them (local free press, social media, word of mouth and even paid advertising if affordable!) to promote their existence and to welcome family historians of all levels of experience.

The Federation continues to promote all member groups when exhibiting at major events.



### REALLY USEFUL SHOW

#### EAST MIDLANDS

Saturday 15 June

University of Nottingham  
King's Meadow Campus,  
Lenton Lane,  
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Family history societies  
Archives and *Family Tree* magazine  
PLUS Expert talks  
Optional tour of University Manuscripts  
and Special Collections Rooms  
(book on arrival, limited numbers)

Free admission Free parking

Full details will be in our May edition

[www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live](http://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com/2024-live)

### STOP PRESS!

Oxfordshire FHS Fair is back! Saturday 26 October at  
Cherwell School North Site on Marston Ferry Road, Oxford,  
OX2 7EE. More details [www.ofhs.uk/](http://www.ofhs.uk/)

Global collection for tracing  
British Home Children  
launched by Findmypast

Find  
my past

A new collaboration between Canadian and UK organisations sees creation of the first major collection of records pertaining to Home Children.

Over 130,000 British children were sent to British Overseas Territories as part of forced migration schemes between 1860s and 1970s.

Offered for free, the records will allow an estimated 4m+ descendants of Home Children to trace their ancestors for the first time.

*This collection launched on Findmypast at Rootstech. It is in collaboration with The National Archives, British Library, Library and Archives Canada, and Home Children Canada.*

[www.findmypast.co.uk/page/british-home-children](http://www.findmypast.co.uk/page/british-home-children)



# Really Useful Back Page

## Family History Research Aids from the Experts



Parish Chest, a service from the Family History Federation, has over sixty family history societies and some twenty-plus traders, at a one-stop online shop, offering a wide range of family history materials in some sixteen categories including:

- *Parish register transcriptions and more from local FHS*
- *Memorial inscriptions information from gravestones across the country, compiled by local FHS*
- *Nonconformists: Baptists, Wesleyans, Independents, Quakers and many more nonconformist lists*
- *Wills and Probate Indexes of wills and administrations*
- *Folders, printing facilities, giftware*
- *..and more!*

**Societies and suppliers regularly add new lines, so visit to see what is there to help you add to your family tree.**

[www.parishchest.com](http://www.parishchest.com)

**Societies and others interested in joining Parish Chest should initially contact:**

[admin@familyhistoryfederation.com](mailto:admin@familyhistoryfederation.com)



# FAMILY HISTORY BOOKS

[www.familyhistorybooksonline.com](http://www.familyhistorybooksonline.com)

Family History Books (FHB) is an online bookshop and publisher; it is owned by the Family History Federation and the aim is to provide a service to the genealogical community. Family History Books offers a range of relevant titles relating to family history research.

FHB welcomes contact from authors! Works of general and specific interest to family historians with wider social history topics are of interest. FHB does not publish individual family histories or fiction. If you have a book in the making, then do contact FHB via

[admin@familyhistoryfederation.com](mailto:admin@familyhistoryfederation.com)

Recent publications include the very popular *Introducing Nonconformist Records—Explaining Nonconformist Records for Family Historians*.



In addition to its [online shop](#) FHB can also be found at major live family history events around the country including the LIVE REALLY USEFUL Family History Shows in Cambridgeshire and Nottinghamshire. Come and visit us and see all the latest titles available. The stall is always very popular!

Happy browsing!

Please explore the range, and place your orders, at

[www.familyhistorybooksonline.com](http://www.familyhistorybooksonline.com)

## The REALLY USEFUL Family History Show

Live shows 20 April and 15 June

Online 15 and 16 November

Please view [www.fhf-reallyuseful.com](http://www.fhf-reallyuseful.com) for full details



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