



Bolton's Genies

November 2021 90th Edition



Bolton Family History Society is a branch of The Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society

Our banner picture shows the first Books of Remembrance in a display we were shown, during a visit to Bolton Town Hall in 2015. This was soon after Julie Lamara and her team at the Bolton History Centre had launched their Bolton Remembers project to collate details re WW1 casualties. The project continues even now, and has been expanded to try to include all recent wars where locals have been involved. More next month.

The Monthly Newsletter of the Bolton Family History Society: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton>

- Newsletter Comments, and Speaker Bookings: boltongenies@mlfhs.org.uk
- 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
- Bolton Research help, please email boltonhelpdesk@mlfhs.org.uk or Manchester Research email a brief enquiry to , <https://www.mlfhs.uk/virtual-help-desk> or visit our

•Bolton Facebook page CURRENTLY INACTIVE <https://goo.gl/n99qtW> 891 Likes and 981 Following 07.11.21

•Bolton Research Collection on MLFHS website: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/research> (for members only and ongoing)

•Join the MLFHS/BFHS at: <https://www.mlfhs.uk/join>

Hello again. So, November has arrived, and we have been moving on through autumnal colours in sunshine, to mists, long nights, and the "horrors" of Halloween, (which seems to have largely replaced the more British but no longer pc Guy Fawkes Night). Now we approach the Remembrance services and then hopefully can plan more normal family Christmases again. We hope you are all fully jabbed and will also enjoy our last talk of this year which promises to provide festive cheer as well as we can, without the physical party. See below page number 3.

It has become evident that we need a new venue as the fees for our current one at the Old Links have increased, and will increase further when the current club house is demolished and a new one erected. To this end we have sourced alternative accommodation, and when the venue and terms etc are approved by the committee we will announce it in the next Bolton Genies newsletter. We have been looking at alternative suitable accommodation and hopefully will have some good news shortly in that direction.

Other news is that our Event and Face Book Administrator Jeanette Holland has had to retire after several years of quality service to the society. We thank her. The announcement has actually stimulated a review of our team strength, and we realise that after having 12 busy committee members in 2017/2018, we now have only 7 "survivors" David Baker, Christine Ellis, Sue Boddy, Rita Greenwood, Barbara Owen Michael Isherwood, and myself Jane Milne. One new member, Val Chadwick has agreed to join our next committee meeting,

We do however still need urgent help. Much of the information technology aspect can be done from home. We have four committee meetings a year and if necessary, these can be carried by zoom. Other activities include a resumption of the monthly Help Desk at the Bolton Central Library on Saturdays, and we need help preparing this newsletter and the Manchester journal articles. Just drafting articles, and the reports for our talks would be a fine start??? There are many other options to give support whether on the

committee or not, either hands on or in ongoing research. For more information, please contact our secretary as above.

IN BOLTON MONTHLY ONLINE MEETINGS CONTINUE

Meetings from our other branches are also available to all members. Just scroll down the page of this link <https://www.mlfhs.uk/> , and select an event. Visitors are also welcome for a small charge.

- Where?

Any convenient “perch” where you can access the internet and have a suitable appliance to connect up. All MLFHS members free. £3.00 to non-members.

- When?

Bolton’s are 7.15pm for 7.30pm start on the first Wednesday of most months.

- How?

We use Eventbrite so all you need to do is open this page

<https://www.mlfhs.uk/bolton/events> , select the talk you wish to attend, left click and follow the booking instructions.



RECENT AND COMING EVENTS

Wednesday 3rd November Researching Welsh Ancestors Online

At last, we have managed to offer a talk about Welsh research after several years of trying to find a suitable speaker with availability. It turned out that Dr Penny Walters, who spoke to us about Adoption last year has been ready willing and able to help us with this difficult subject.

Penny’s notes can be found here on our website for members, and they will be emailed to all attendees. <https://tinyurl.com/4ypfhuw4>.

Her plan was as she explained that

“This session will start with a historical overview of life in Wales, looking at maps, counties, 1720 and 1833 gazetteer descriptions, the Welsh language, traditional dress, Welsh dragon and patron saint.

We will look at the steady heavy industrialisation of the beautiful rural countryside, into coal mining and Merthyr Tydfil specifically. Emigration posters of the 1840s reveal the call to build a new and better life abroad. The crucial role of DNA testing with specified regions and surname distribution will be revealed, as will language, translation tools and scripts. Censuses in Welsh will be analysed and compared to English language censuses. A variety of resources and research strategies will be given to aid looking for ancestors and relatives in Wales. The feeling of connectedness, diaspora and homelands will be explored.”



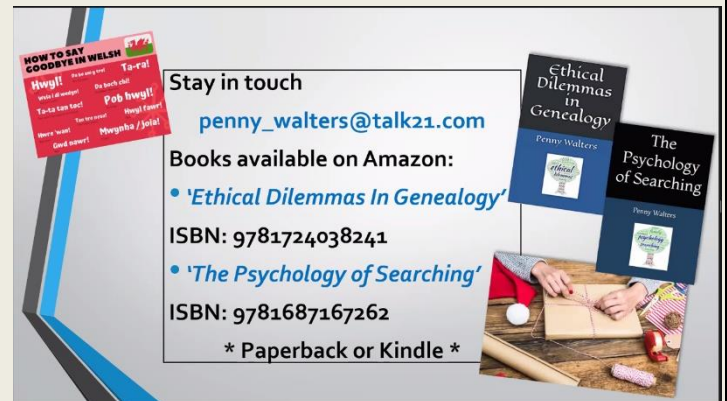
In effect this did summarise exactly what she discussed and the notes available on the link above did expand helpfully on this theme. With at least 57 attending Penny did ask as an aside how many have Welsh ancestry and the chat line hardly stopped afterwards. I counted at least 30+ positive responses and then gave up. I personally knew very little about Welsh history and their traditions. The Welsh language has seemed quite alien to any other languages I have tried to see a logic to, and I would imagine many have found that a deterrent. Penny’s account of how the county boundaries had changed so much must be helpful for those researching censuses etc, the account of the change from rural life to industrialization was similar to that seen in the rest of the UK but this had also affected the use of their native tongue in favour of English. The explanation of why various groups had particular reasons for emigration to particular areas of the USA was interesting. Pennsylvania had attracted three waves from the 17th C Quakers, the 18th C

Cambrian devotees of Morgan John Rhys; Utah attracted members of the Church of Latter Days Saints, Ohio attracted first farmers, then railroad builders , then steel workers and miners.

Links are given in the notes to many useful websites and a few tricks were demonstrated re how to understand Welsh census returns. The National Library of Scotland was recommended as a source of maps, (see article below), and a suggestion of following the enumerators route on a contemporary map to understand the area seems a helpful idea.

The use of DNA to trace population drifts between Ireland and Scotland was also recommended for back tracking generation movements and various WDYTyr subjects were recommended as examples of the options to investigate when researching Welsh ancestry such as Colin Jackson British athlete, Griff Rhys Jones Welsh actor/ presenter/author, Carole Vorderman, Greg Davies, and Fearnie Cotton, plus others from the BBC "Coming Home" series.

Finally, Penny did mention her two books currently on sale and also, she left an invitation for anyone to email her for assistance re Welsh research on penny.walters@talk21.com . Thank you, Penny, what a "fantastic speaker" (she was worried I couldn't spell that 😊)



Wednesday 1st December 7.30pm Bolton FHS Meeting – "Christmas food and drink through the ages" by Sylvia Levi who is an enthusiastic food historian with a particular interest in what our ancestors baked, and

Simon Fowler <https://www.history-man.co.uk/> a professional genealogist, writer and tutor who "enjoys his Roast Beef on Christmas Day."

Join us as we find out what the men, women and children of Bolton and Manchester would have eaten and drank over the Christmas period. We will be finding out what the men, women and children of Bolton and Manchester rich and poor, would have eaten and drank over the Christmas period. Would they have eaten turkey and furmity? Or have drunk Smoking Bishop? And would the paupers in the workhouse have been allowed a pint of beer? All will be revealed.

They promised us we'll be supplying an eighteenth century mince pie recipe, that your ancestors might have enjoyed. Why not make the recipe and join us to sample it during the meeting?"

Here it is

A Georgian Mince Pie recipe

This recipe is from Hannah Glasse's "The Art of Cookery" (first published in 1747).

To make mince-pies the best way.

Take three pounds of suet shred very fine, and chopped as small as possible; two pounds of raisins stoned, and chopped as fine as possible; two pounds of currants nicely picked, washed, rubbed, and dried at the fire; half a hundred of fine pipins, pared, cored and chopped small; half a pound of sugar pounded fine; a quarter an ounce, of mace , a quarter of an ounce of cloves, two large nutmegs, all beat fine; put all together into a great pan, and mix it well together with half a pint of brandy, and half a pint of sack [wine]; put it down close in a stone pot, and it will keep good for four months

She then goes on to give instructions for actually making the pies Originally, minc't or shred pies included meat, sometimes mutton, sometimes beef, but during the eighteenth-century cooks began to leave the meat out. Mince pies were eaten year-round not just for Christmas though and Hannah Glasse also had a recipe for 'Lenten mincemeat' which used chopped hard-boiled eggs instead of fat (but also quite a lot of



alcohol!!)

Here is the recipe suitably modernised with the amounts reduced to more manageable proportions

Ingredients:

300g suet (fresh or from a packet) – you can use vegetable suet, although the taste will be slightly different

250g raisins (chopped small)

250g currants

10 small apples (an older English variety if possible) peeled, cored and chopped small

150g brown sugar

1/4 tsp ground mace

1/4 tsp ground cloves

1 tsp grated nutmeg

150ml brandy

150ml white wine (or dry sherry)

Method: Fresh suet should be chopped very finely or grated. Add the wine and brandy, suet and dried fruit to a large non-metallic mixing bowl. Then start adding the peeled cored and chopped apples. Chop the apples in small batches and immediately put them into the bowl coating them with the brandy and wine to stop them going brown. Mix everything in, stirring thoroughly, and cover with a clean cloth or cling film and leave overnight in the fridge. The next day stir the mixture again and then spoon into sterilized jars and seal. Store in a dark, cool place for up to 2 months. The mincemeat will darken as it ages.

(Editor's note-I have a similar family recipe and it has lasted much longer than this, thanks to the alcohol content 😊)

Book here via Eventbrite Using this link <https://tinyurl.com/5ffthass>

THIS MONTHS LOCAL NEWS and SOME ORGANISATION UPDATES

Lancashire Records



<http://goo.gl/l29JpL> Message from Ian Hartas, Local BMD Project.

A new Advanced Search page option has now been installed on all the Local BMD Project websites with links to it via the menu tabs at the top of each page.

This new search form will not replace the existing search

pages but adds to the options that the user has, so if anyone wishes to use the current search forms they still can.



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



Lancashire Archives News and Events <https://goo.gl/H8UexE> for their latest newsletter and more

Findmypast October 27th, 2021, <https://tinyurl.com/tf8r2utx>

January 6th, 2022, The Release of the 1921 Census

Good to have a bit of good news?

"In partnership with The National Archives and the Office for National Statistics, we're delighted to announce that the 1921 Census of England and Wales will be exclusively available online at Findmypast from 6 January 2022." and *"The 1921 Census is a detailed snapshot of 38 million lives, available online only at findmypast.co.uk from 6 January 2022"*.

"How much will the census cost? £2.50 for every record transcript and £3.50 for every original record image. This will cover the cost of digitising and transcribing the 18,235,242 images created from the records supplied exclusively to us by The National Archives.

For all 12-month Pro subscribers, there will be a 10% discount on any 1921 Census purchases".

Now the date is nearing, here is an interesting article from last May 25th, 2021 " Hide-and-Seek in the Roaring Twenties" by Dr. Sophie Kay, posted in Data Analysis, Family History, Occupations, Research Skills, Statistics <https://tinyurl.com/ndv96yet> which explains some of the exciting extra bits we will be able to access. The date of the actual census was of course delayed due to industrial action , so instead of the usual April date , June 19th was selected, after considerable discussion and an awareness of the traditional holiday dates of many workers. The hope was to find as near a "normal" day as possible, but apparently it has already been noted that Blackpool's population seemed to be unexpectedly large, and it was suspected good weather had encouraged early holidays. There are also apparently many one parent families evident, not surprising really so soon after WW1 and the flu pandemic.

The MLFHS has of course been running several events to expand on this project, available to be seen here <https://www.mlfhs.uk/1921-census-event> .

Saturday 13th November 9 am - 5.30 pm – Slavery Family Trees Conference Lancaster University Library (via Microsoft Teams)

(Free) ONLINE REGISTRATION LINK <https://lancaster-uk.libcal.com/event/3803866> . Lancaster Black History Group (LBHG)

16th of November ONLINE panel discussion 10-11 am and exhibition of Slavery Family Trees Banner in LU library from Sunday 14 Nov <https://tinyurl.com/495rymjb>

Bolton Central Library Free Talks for November

Saturday 20th November "The Top Storey Club Tragedy" - A Talk by Dave Burnham 11am - 12pm FREE, no need to book

How many of you remember this dreadful event.

It was the dawn of the 1960s and things were starting to change. In Bolton, still a traditional cotton town, people could visit newly opened eateries and nightclubs such as Aristotle's, the Tai Tung or the Kismet Restaurant. In December 1961 a new fashionable nightclub had opened in town. The Top Storey Club was high above the River Croal in an old warehouse on Crown Street. On Monday 1st May 1961, a fire swept the building leading to the death of 19 people.

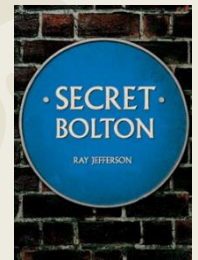
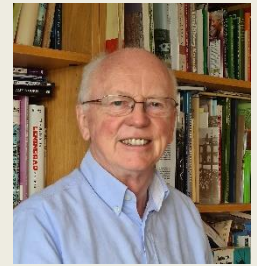
Join us as we reflect on the tragic events of this night and get a glimpse into life in Bolton in the 1960s with a talk by local historian and MLFHS member Dave Burnham.

Incidentally Dave will also be Zooming to us next March to update us about the Worktown project. He is a busy man.



Saturday 27th Nov 11am-12 noon “Secret Bolton” a book launch by Ray Jefferson. An illustrated talk by Ray in the lecture theatre with a book signing. Further details will be available soon. Bolton has its roots in Lancashire where it was established as a textile town from the Middle Ages, but it was during the Industrial Revolution that it grew to become one of the major cotton manufacturing centres of the world. Engineering, paper making, bleaching, and dyeing followed, with thousands employed in the manufacture of textile machinery, steam engines, boilers, other heavy machinery, and tools in addition to the thousands employed in the spinning mills. As that heavy industry and textile manufacturing declined during the twentieth century, other more modern activities took their place and alongside the town's surviving historic and industrial buildings a modern town has developed. Colourful stories lie behind the face of today's Bolton, some of which are well known, although other events are well worth investigation. How exactly did the borough obtain a plentiful supply of clean drinking water during the period of its rapid expansion in the nineteenth century? What birth pangs accompanied the move towards local democracy after 1792? How is one street linked to two aviation tragedies? How did an American geologist come to make his mark and remain in Bolton for ever? With tales of remarkable characters, unusual events and surprising locations, Secret Bolton will appeal to all those with an interest in the history of this town in Greater Manchester. 100 Illustrations, unspecified

Light refreshments are available. No need to book . Free admission.



SOME INTERESTING, USEFUL, AND MAINLY FREE WEBSITES



<https://maps.nls.uk/>

I recently watched a few free Zoom talks from the Scottish Indexers <https://www.scottishindexes.com/default.aspx> during their last Conference XIII - 23 October 2021, and I found this talk about the NLS particularly interesting. After explaining the history of the creation of the collection, and giving a quick overview of their vast and growing free to use digital contents, Chris Fleet explained the many options of searching. He added that many more maps will be online soon as their copyright restrictions expire . They now offer a variety of focussed types and locations of maps, such as Ordnance Survey, Bartholomew, <https://maps.nls.uk/> . Initially this was for Scotland, but they have now expanded to cover most of the north of England in detail, and beyond, with simple explanations of how to search found here <https://maps.nls.uk/guide/> .

Lancashire maps date from 1645 by following this link <https://maps.nls.uk/counties/lancashire.html> . This is the link to a Lancaster map of 1767

Name: Bowen, Emanuel, -1767

Title: An accurate map of the county of Lancaster ...

Imprint: London : C. Brodes, R. Wilkinson & R. Sayer, 1781

Pagination: 1 map ; 665 x 507 mm.

Shelfmark: EME.s.126

<https://maps.nls.uk/view/220113208> and if you zoom in on it looking at the Bolton area (or others if you prefer of course) , it is interesting to see amongst many other options , what churches



existed (or not), at that time, and why folk made the journeys they did to celebrate and record their births, marriages and deaths.

This is a wonderful , ambitious , and mainly free resource which helps us to put our ancestors lives into the context of the day. Their future plans include, completing the posting of single sheet maps of Scotland by the end of 2021, (now near completed), and once a five year embargo for maps of England and Wales has been lifted next year, to be able to digitalize OS Town Plans, OS Medium scale mapping of 1 " and smaller , plus OS National Grid large scale maps. Their plans then extend to Europe and further afield, hoping to double their number of online maps by 2025 to about 500,000 sheets, with about a third of them available online digitally.

COMMENTS, QUERIES, and MEMORIES)

Just to remind you if you missed the first part of this story in last month's newsletter, we have been hearing some fascinating memories recently of one of our more senior members , Frances Barlow, who is nearing 90 years of age. She still attends and actively participates in Rita Greenwoods family history classes We knew she had spent a lot of time in hospital as a child in the 1940s, and also run a post office at one point but little more . At last, during the Covid lockdown, she agreed to try to write some of her reminiscences down, and here is the second of two instalments .

"This is My Life So Far" Part 2 by Frances Barlow

I had made a new friend, Gladys, a really nice girl and full of fun, her boyfriend was also called Bill. We were the same age and started discussing what we would do for our 21st birthdays. My Bill said he would love to organise a party. He had a friend, Jack Howcroft, who owned the Seven Stars Pub in Little Lever, who offered the venue for the party and another friend offered to do all the catering. I had a lovely time, with champagne provided by Jack. Everything changed for the better for me from that night.

Another year passed and I had still not met Bill's parents. I didn't think much about it, especially as we were enjoying each other's company so much and I had to work alternate weeks on nights. Bill did introduce me to a friend of his who had a small holding in Astley Bridge and whilst there the friend's wife asked me if Bill had told me he had had a short and ill-fated wartime marriage. I was naturally upset and asked Bill about it later. He hadn't known how to tell me.

Shortly after this, Bill did ask me to meet his parents, I was a little nervous, but everything went well. They were happy when he asked me to marry him while we were all together and we started to plan. Bill's uncle was on the committee for the main Co-operative Society in Bolton town centre and arranged a job for me. Within a month I was there training to be a shop assistant which was great.

Gladys and her Bill was married on 2nd April 1955 and that day Bill, and I set a date for our wedding. My half day was Wednesday, and Bill's Thursday and he always rang me at the shop at lunchtime. This particular day he asked if I could use my lunch hour to meet him. He took me to H. Samuel's Jewellers, and I thought he was going to get me an engagement ring but had a shock when it was a wedding ring.

We were getting married on 2nd July 1955 and I asked my brother-in-law to give me away and Gladys was matron of honour. We were married at Mornington Road Presbyterian Chapel, Somerset Road, → Bolton by the Reverend David Carr. (now known as Grace Church Photograph supplied by & © Copyright of Shirley Ingham.)



After our honeymoon in Fleetwood, we settled down to live with Bill's parents. Still having separate half days off, Bill thought it a good idea if he taught me to drive in a 1938 Wolsey. A year after we were married, I passed my test at the second attempt and was told if I could drive a Wolsey, I could drive anything. (Editor, something like this maybe courtesy of Wikipedia?

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wolseley_14/60)

A couple of years later, Bill's mum became ill and passed away, his dad was out with friends a few months later, and he suddenly collapsed and died. What a shock, how can things like this happen so quickly.

In 1961, Bill came home from work a bit upset. He had been working for the butcher since 1946, but he was retiring which led to Bill going for a complete change of occupation. He went for an interview to take over a Sub-Post Office with living accommodation and he was appointed on 31st May 1961. After four weeks' training, Walshaw Sub-Post Office in Bury, was turned over to us and we became very busy (Editor Wow, now a butty shop, and we have stopped there a few times for a takeaway. I see the post box is still there though →). – Tuesdays was family allowance day and Thursday's old age pension day, with queues lining the street. There wasn't first and second-class postage then – a stamp cost 2 and a half old pence. There was a side-line for me selling bits of underwear, socks and so on. It is now 1964 and we were full of excitement to welcome our daughter Sandra. I still cannot believe how lucky we were, with more happy years to come.

In 1971, we had to change from £ s d to decimal coinage and when we went on to computers, I found it a little difficult as I had missed such a lot of schooling when I was in hospital, but I actually managed to get through the tests and got a certificate to prove I could do it.

I decided to add ladies and children's clothing to my stock, as well as helping with the Post Office. I think I made a good choice as quite a few customers were interested, and I was even asked to do a fashion show. I was somewhat reluctant as I had never thought of anything like that, but I got a few friends from the village to model and got my daughter to model the children's clothes.

After 22 years in the Post Office, Bill started to feel unwell so in 1984, I became the postmistress for the next three years after which the post office was transferred into my daughter's name. When the grandchildren started to come along, I still helped Sandra in the post office.

Bill and I bought a bungalow in Little Lever and enjoyed many years of holidays and cruises. I was devastated when Bill died in 1998 and needed to keep busy. After a while I started taking daytime classes in computers. Then I got interested in photography including making reel-to-reel films of my photographs. I was also interested in family history and started a course to learn that. As everyone in the classes are keen on the same thing, it is fairly easy to make friends and treat the class as somewhat of a social event. Not knowing much about my forebears, I have been fascinated to learn such a lot about people in the family I didn't know.

I am lucky that I have three grandchildren, the one who lives near me is a big help and my great grandchildren are also a source of much pleasure.

Thank you so much Frances for a fascinating story. © Frances Barlow



Jim Holgate has kindly permitted me to share this message to Denis McCann October 10th on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/502317166638370>

Hi Denis, The story of James and Joseph Bridge 25.10.20 was an interesting read with their connection to Bolton. We are aware of other famous and infamous people with Bolton connections but two I would bring to your attention although I'm not sure if this is the right Facebook site in which to do this, if not then please delete. The two connections are as follows. First of all, everyone knows of Richard Attenborough and his even more famous brother David. (See Bolton Genies newsletter May 2020 p7

<https://tinyurl.com/nkbc24p>), but another connection is to the Olympic and World Champion showjumper Virginia Helen Antoinette Holgate, aka Ginny Leng-Elliott aka Virginia Holgate-Leng. <https://olympics.com/en/athletes/virginia-holgate-leng>, image courtesy of the Team GB website 6.11.20 → <https://tinyurl.com/r6d53ymn>. Ginny was born in Malta and her career is well documented here

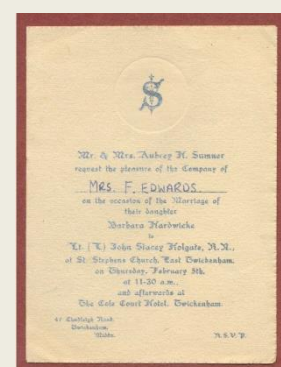
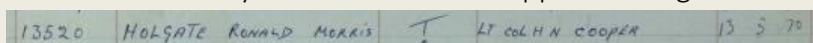
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia_Elliott but how many of you know that her father was a Boltonian. Ginny Holgate married Hamish Leng in 1985 and subsequently Michael Elliot in 1993. She was the daughter of Ronald Morris Holgate and Heather Rice. Ronald was a high ranking officer in the Royal Marines.

(Editor's extras – Jim knew Ronald's parents were George Parkinson Holgate b 1893 Bolton and Lily Isherwood b 1892 Bolton, and he had already found George P Holgate living at 129 Westbrook St, Bolton on the 1911 census. Prior to that on the 1901 census the Holgates were living at Hodgkinsons Farm in Heaton. George and Lily married 6th March 1920 Castle Street Chapel, the Haulgh., and had two sons, John S born 29th May 1921 and Ronald M born 19th May 1924 Bolton (dates from the 1939 Register). George and Lily can be found on the Electoral registers 1832-1932 roll on Findmypast in 1924 living at 8, Thornbank off Tavistock Road Bolton two doors from Elizabeth and Frank Isherwood who are probably relatives but not proved yet. This seems likely to have been Ronald's place of birth. They had moved to Devonshire Road later before moving down to Plymouth, where his father George died in 1935. Ronald is with his widowed mother Lily and brother John S in Plymouth in 1939. It seems from Naval records on Ancestry Ronald had joined the Royal Marines by 1944 with a Commission and he married Heather Rice in 1950 in Tavistock.

Their first child Michael John was born in Tavistock in 1951, then Virginia Helen Antoinette was born in 1955 in Malta. Ronald's Royal Naval records show considerable movement with an illustrious career and promotions including a period as a Lt Col in 1968 in the embassy in Manila in the Philippines. Google shows he is even listed as a member of the Royal Automobile Club in 1970 proposed by a Lt Col Cooper. He died at Little Ford, Silvertown in Devon 11th December 1980.

Ronald also had an older brother of course, John Stacey Holgate, also born in Bolton, in 1921. We found his middle name at last using the GRO Index and confirmed by mothers surname, and his marriage in 1950 in Twickenham to Barbara Hardwick Sumner via a copy of an invitation to his wedding on sale on eBay!!!

If anyone reading this is related to either of the brothers Jim would love to hear from you, as researching the last 100 years is proving difficult. It is surmised that John also joined the Royal Navy as the invitation to his marriage to Barbara Hardwick Sumner describes him as a Lieutenant RN. Some London Gazette records on Findmypast show him becoming an Admiralty cleric in June 1938 and a 2nd Lt in 2nd Oct 1942. We have no more after his marriage Ginny seems to have disappeared from the public domain after her second marriage.



The search for a harbour in the middle of Bolton



If anyone ever sat next to dad at the family history society meetings, they often received a tale, usually about his father or grandfather. One such tale set me on a search for the true facts of the event.

The story starts with a tram driver shouting to my grandad Isherwood, as the tram passed him on its way up Blackburn Road. The driver recognised Frank, and knew that he often had items posted in the local paper.

"Hey Frank" he shouted, "you want to get yourself down into town, there's a fire at African Pearce Harbour"

Frank knew this was his chance to beat the professional journalists to the scoop, and quickly got the next tram down into town, and sure enough he got the by-line when the news item appeared in the paper.

Now, you might think that's not a very long or interesting tale, but to me it was intriguing, where was there a harbour in the middle of Bolton? Could I find a copy of the newspaper article to confirm this event actually happened. I knew there was a Canal Basin in Bolton known as Church Wharf, but could that be described as a harbour, and presumably, African Pearce were a shipping company.

I asked dad, and he told me it was in the Bow Street area of town behind the old Co-op building on Bridge Street, or somewhere in that locality. Well, that was even further away from the canal, leaving only the River Croal as the source of any water to host a harbour, but no shipping company was ever going to use the Croal for shipping, surely. I pondered on the tale many times, and sadly dad passed away, so I couldn't ask anything more, i didn't even know when the event happened, and Google had no clue where the harbour was either.

Then a recent "Looking Back" item in the Bolton News 14th July 2021 → answered my question. A picture of the building used by "African Piassava". I'm sure you've all seen the Bolton comedian Peter Kay doing his misheard song lyrics set, and been amused by how things can be mis-interpreted, well this was a classic case of hearing something different to what was said.

African Pearce Harbour wasn't a harbour at all, African Piassava was in fact the fibrous parts of the palm tree often used to make brushes and brooms, and also the name of the company that brought them to Bolton for processing. The Bolton News item also noted that the building used by the company burned down in 1934, when dad was only 2, so it seems that he must have inherited the gift of telling tales from his dad, just like i did.



I still have to look through the Newspaper archives to find the article, but at least i now only have a year's worth of newspapers to go through.

By Michael Isherwood

Thanks Michael. Bolton's version of Chines whispers???? 😊

We have also received this plea for help from Ruth Alexander Email: ruth.alexander.01@bbc.co.uk

"Message: Hello, I'm a journalist with The Food Chain, a BBC World Service radio programme. I wondered if you might be able to help me with my research for an upcoming edition of the programme, please? We want to bring together people who remember rationing during and after the war to share their experiences, and I wondered whether any of your group's members might fit the bill and be interested in talking to me about their recollections? Or maybe they have relatives who would be? If you could help me, get in touch with anyone who might be interested in finding out more, I'd be grateful. Thank you in advance for any assistance or pointers you can offer. Kind regards, Ruth Alexander Tel: 07932 726559"

Editor's Note

Rationing was of course the only practical way of keeping civilians left at home adequately fed and clothed during WW2. (Military supplied for their own). After names had been collected in the 1939 Register ID cards such as above were issued, then rationing books with coupons, making individuals eligible for basic essentials according to their assessed needs.



AND FINALLY OLD OCCUPATIONS

Dr Sophie Kay's #OccupationOfTheDay is...BUTTOCKER (mining): "gets down angle coal, or 'buttock', with pick under direction of hewer." Dict of Occup'l Terms (1927)

Has anybody found any other interesting occupations they would like to share 😊 ???



COMING ONLINE ACTIVITIES FROM OTHER MLFHS BRANCHES

Please note these events are all included free to subscribed MLFHS members, £3 to guests except Oldham



Thursday, 2nd December 19:30pm – 22:30 GMT Manchester branch

Old Ireland in Colour: Dr Sarah-Anne Buckley and John Breslin

Old Ireland in Colour celebrates the rich history of Ireland and the Irish through the colour restoration of stunning images of all walks of Irish life, and the Irish abroad, throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. From the chaos of the Civil War to the simple beauty of the islands, each image has been exquisitely transformed and every page is bursting with life.

Using a combination of cutting-edge artificial intelligence technology and his own historical research, John Breslin has meticulously colourised these pictures with breath-taking attention to detail and authenticity.

Book via Eventbrite <https://tinyurl.com/w5ccm7vz>



Saturday, 13th November 14:00 – 15:30 GMT Oldham and District Branch Zoom talk

"Family Life in the Industrial Revolution ... the autobiography of Benjamin Shaw, 1772-1841" by Dr Alan Crosby

The talk covers everything from child labour, via bastardy and terrible working conditions, to problem teenagers and early death; the world of your Lancashire ancestors, 200 years ago.

A Short Account of Benjamin Shaw and his Family &c with some Short Sketches of his ancestors written by himself in 1826. Booking via Eventbrite <https://tinyurl.com/5e96uztf>



Saturday , 20th November 2pm to 4.30pm Anglo Scottish Branch

“ Palaeography and the Kirk Session Records A Practical Guide to Understanding the Writing.” By Robin Urquhart.

Robin was Head of Digitisation at the National Records of Scotland until March, when he retired. Prior to that he worked in local archives in the west of Scotland. He was the creator of the Scottish Handwriting website , namely www.scottishhandwriting.com . We have had a few talks about Kirk Session records over the years, but now that a large tranche of Kirk Session records have been released online, we might want to look at the originals, and get that 'feel' for and insight into the events recorded therein.

The Kirk Session Records are held on the Scotlands People website; they are court records of the times, whilst they contain legal terminology, they are not too difficult to read. The earliest of these records, from perhaps before the 1780s are more difficult to read, and this is where the experience of Robin Urquhart of the National Records of Scotland will become invaluable as he shows us how to decipher and read these older scripts.

Eventbrite Link <https://www.mlfhs.uk/anglo-scots/events>

SOME OTHER LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETIES' ARE RESUMING PHYSICAL MEETINGS BUT WITH DIFFERENT ARRANGEMENTS.

WE ADVISE CHECKING THEIR RESPECTIVE WEBSITES PERIODICALLY FOR UPDATES ON SAME.



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

Email margaretk@talktalk.net . Physical meetings have returned on the last Tuesday of each month at 7.30pm, at St Luke's Church, Chorley Old Road, BL1 3BE opposite Shepherd Cross St, Bolton,

Tuesday 30th November Joe O'Neill "The Secret World of the Victorian Lodging House"



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

Illustrated talks and meetings have returned on the fourth Wednesday of the month, at Longsight Church Centre, Harwood BL2 3HX beginning at 7.30pm. This next month's event

Wednesday 24th November – "Allen Clarke's Moorlands and Memories" by Paul Salveson.



Westhoughton Local History Group – <http://goo.gl/XNugl5>

Meetings take place on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month, between 10am and 12md

Meeting at the Westhoughton Methodist Church Hall.

Thursday 18th November : "Women in World War 1" by Graham Stirrup

Thursday 1st December "The Secret World of he Victorian Lodging House" by Joe O'Neil - signed books available after the meeting



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

Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month at 7:30pm at the Horwich Resource Centre, Beaumont Road (off Longworth Road), Horwich BL6 7BG.

Open Days, are held most months on Saturdays between 10am --- 1pm

Tuesday 7.30pm 9th November "The Industrial History of Winter Hill" - Alan Crosby