

# Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire

www.hslc.org.uk

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Happy New Year! It was wonderful for me to meet so many members of the Society at our events in 2009, and we have an equally exciting and stimulating programme for 2010 which I invite you to attend. The AGM will take place on Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February at 2pm in the Hornby Room at Liverpool Central Library, followed by a talk by Prof. Hannah Barker on the lower middle classes in North-West England, 1760-1820. We have visits planned to Chetham's Library in Manchester (Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April at 2pm), Wigan Pier (Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> May, time to be confirmed), the Boat Museum, Ellesmere Port (Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June at 11am), and the Liverpool Athenaeum (Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> September at 2pm, including a talk by John Tiernan). Meanwhile, on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March at 2pm, Dr. David Harrison will be talking on the Liverpool Masonic Rebellion and the Wigan Grand Lodge at the Hornby Room, Liverpool Central Library. Additionally, we are very happy to be once again holding a joint event with St. Helens Historical Society on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> October at the Friends Meeting House in St. Helens at 7.30pm with a talk by Dr. Julie-Marie Strange on fatherhood in the late-Victorian and Edwardian industrial North-West. We are also delighted to be joining forces with the Liverpool History Society on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> November at Liverpool Hope University's Everton campus to listen to John Tiernan on the Liverpool architect, Thomas Shelmerdine. As ever, details of these events can be found on our website ([www.hslc.org.uk](http://www.hslc.org.uk)) and booking arrangements for the visits will be available via the newsletters in due course.

2010 also promises to be an important year for us. *Transactions* will now be published by Liverpool University Press, and we are looking forward to a very fruitful relationship with this burgeoning and dynamic publisher. Volume 158 for 2009 is currently in the final stages of production and will be making its way to you in due course. We had some administrative glitches last year regarding the despatch of *Transactions*, which we trust will not be repeated. Can I take this opportunity to thank those members who responded so swiftly and patiently to our requests for the return of volumes, the payment of outstanding subscriptions etc. In this regard, can I also heartily thank our long-serving Council member, Dr. Di Ascott, for all her hard work in sorting out these difficulties. We now have a new membership secretary, Simon Hill, and subscription and membership enquiries should now be sent to him at the address listed on the membership form below. Once again, many thanks for supporting the Society. Council and I look forward to renewing the acquaintance of established members and meeting new ones at our visits and talks for 2010.

*Nicholas White*

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## FUTURE MEETINGS

**Prof. Hannah Barker: 'At home with the lower-middle classes: home, business and household in north-west England, 1760-1820', Liverpool Central Library, Hornby Room, Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2010 following the AGM at 2.00.**

Hannah Barker is Professor of British History at the University of Manchester and she has previously taught at Keele University and Worcester College, Oxford. Her publications include *The Business of Women: Female Enterprise and Urban Development in Northern England 1760-1830* (Oxford, 2006) and *Newspapers, Politics and Public Opinion in Late Eighteenth-Century England* (Oxford, 1998), and she is currently working on a research project examining how the internal dynamics of family businesses influenced business organisation and decision making. Drawing on this research, her lecture will encourage her audience to be 'at home' with the lower-middle or trading classes in the sense that we are at ease with them as historical subjects and do not overlook them because of their perceived

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unimportance. Her opening phrase will, however, also be taken literally, because her lecture will take us inside the homes of these people, exploring the living arrangements and familial relations of small business households in north-west English towns during the period of the industrial revolution. It will focus on evidence from inventories and personal writing, as well as examining the buildings in which these families lived, some of which still survive.

**Dr David Harrison: 'The Liverpool Masonic Rebellion and the Wigan Grand Lodge', Liverpool Central Library, Hornby Room, Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2010 at 2.00.**

Dr David Harrison is the author of many articles and papers on the history of Freemasonry. He has recently published *The Genesis of Freemasonry*, based on his doctoral research on the complex and hidden history of English Freemasonry which he undertook at the University of Liverpool. He has taught for more than ten years and has also appeared on a number of television and radio programmes. His lecture will examine the Masonic rebellion of Liverpool in 1823, which was an event that has only recently been rediscovered, the event being important, not just to Freemasonry, but to the history of Liverpool and indeed a number of other Lancashire towns such as Wigan and Warrington. Dr Harrison will discuss the events that took place, the people who were involved, and the questions that the incident raises about the social networking and interaction between businesses in the industrial north west of England during the early nineteenth century.

**Visit to Chetham's Library, Manchester, Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2010 at 2.00.**

This event offers members the opportunity to learn more about one of our most important institutions – the oldest public library in the English-speaking world. Founded in 1653, Chetham's boasts an impressive range of holdings, including manuscript collections, a large and important body of printed works, particularly from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and an interesting collection of pictures, photographs and glass lantern slides. This visit is the latest in our series of archive and library visits which members have found extremely interesting and, in many cases, very helpful. Please return the enclosed booking slip if you wish to participate in this event. (There is no charge, but the library staff wish to know how many members to expect.)

**SPECIAL OFFER**

The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire has some remaining stock of volume 136, *Liverpool Town Books, 1649-71* (1999), edited by the late Michael Power, a former Editor of *Transactions* and long-standing Vice-President and Council member of the Historic Society. This important publication is now available at the reduced price of £20, plus £2 postage & packing. If you would like to purchase a copy, please complete and return this slip, together with a cheque for £22 made payable to 'Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, to the address below.

Name:.....

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Post to:

Dr Fiona Pogson, Dept of Politics & History, Liverpool Hope University, Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JD.

Tel. 0151 291 3115 Email: [pogsonf@hope.ac.uk](mailto:pogsonf@hope.ac.uk)

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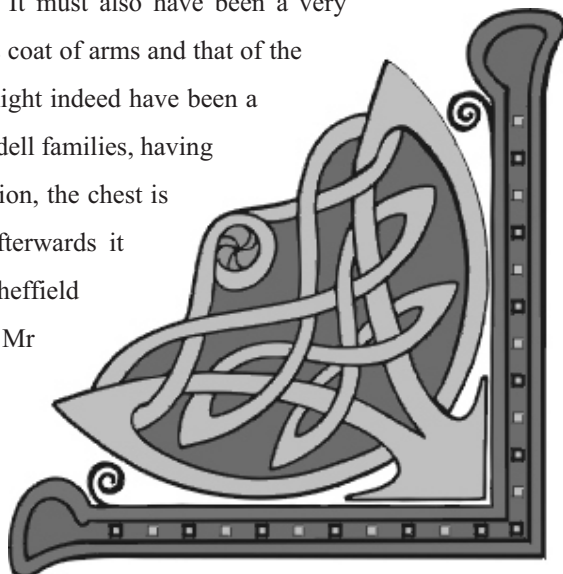
## **REPORTS ON SOCIETY MEETINGS**

### **Dr Fiona Edmonds: 'A Twelfth-Century Migration from Wales to Lancashire', Monday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2009.**

The Society's September meeting was a very successful event shared with the St Helens Historical Society. Dr Edmonds, from the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, Cambridge University, lectured to a large audience on a subject that grew from an interest in surviving Celtic place names in the region. She began by examining the late thirteenth-century claim of Robert Banastre to lands near Prestatyn that his ancestor, also Robert Banastre, had apparently held over a century earlier, before his ejection by Owain Gwynedd and removal to Lancashire in the 1160s. This earlier Robert Banastre appears to have brought with him both Anglo-Norman and Welsh followers, and the rest of Dr Edmonds' lecture focused on what surviving sources reveal about the identity and impact of some of these Welsh settlers in parts of Lancashire. She concluded that a number of families seem to have retained strong Welsh identities for several generations following their arrival in Lancashire. The continuing use of Welsh epithets, as well as personal names, indicates some use of the Welsh language well into the thirteenth century and the existence of Celtic place names not seen in Domesday might be a consequence of this twelfth-century migration. There is also some evidence of affiliation to Welsh interests long after the resettlement, particularly on the part of Guy, son of Madog, from Aughton, who chose to support Llewelyn's uprising against Edward I. This was a fascinating lecture which drew on a wide range of surviving evidence from the St Helens archive as well as from the Lancashire County Record Office and the National Archives. It took place in the historic Friends Meeting House which dates from at least the early seventeenth century, and which our members were able to look around before the lecture. We are pleased to have been invited to hold a joint meeting with the St Helens Historical Society in their anniversary year and we would like to thank members of the Society for their warm welcome and excellent hospitality.

### **Mr David Brazendale: 'Mayor Edward Williamson of Liverpool, c. 1590-1669, and his chest', Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2009.**

One of the Society's own members, Mr David Brazendale, spoke on the career of Edward Williamson, a successful Liverpool mercer who served as bailiff and mayor during the 1640s and 1650s, and who presented a handsome carved chest to St Nicholas's chapel in 1651. The lecture examined the changing fortunes of a man who served the city in a number of offices yet who also experienced difficulties and conflicts of varying kinds at several stages in his career. Little is known about his earlier life; he seems to disappear from the records for over a decade after the early 1620s. Later he was a very active member of the city's elite and was involved in important matters such as the city's claim to land in Ireland and its dispute with the Molyneux family for control of the Mersey ferries. His detailed will reveals something of his wealth; he was able to leave plate worth over £400 as well as shares in a number of ships, and his donation of the chest enabled him during his lifetime to demonstrate his financial success. It must also have been a very meaningful gift to the chapel, given that the carvings on the chest included his coat of arms and that of the Blundell family. Mr Brazendale suggested that Williamson's wife Margaret might indeed have been a Blundell, and he certainly seems to have had connections with one of the Blundell families, having taken on as an apprentice one John Blundell. Clearly a very significant donation, the chest is known to have still been in the chapel in the 1750s but at some point afterwards it disappeared, mysteriously resurfacing in a second-hand furniture shop in Sheffield before being taken to a church near Coldstream where it remains today. Mr Brazendale gave his audience a fascinating insight into the activities, interests and concerns of a prominent citizen of Liverpool, and it is perhaps very fitting that the lecture was held in Allerton Hall, the former home of William Roscoe.



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**Dr Charlotte Wildman: 'Christmas in Liverpool shops between the wars (1918-1939)', Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2009.**

The Society's last meeting of 2009 was again held in the library at Allerton Hall. The lecturer was Dr Charlotte Wildman, recently a teaching fellow at the University of Manchester, and she spoke on the subject of developments in the retail sector, led by department stores, which effected a significant change in shopping habits in Liverpool and Manchester during the inter war years. Her lecture examined the ways in which stores' advertising campaigns tried to attract a much broader range of customers, moving away from their previous focus on the wealthy. These campaigns, clearly aimed at the female population, seem to have received a very positive response, with shopping increasingly becoming a popular leisure activity and one that was concentrated noticeably more strongly in the city centre. Shoppers were attracted by carefully presented window and shop floor displays featuring, for example, items of clothing that were often beyond their means but which could be made up at home using less expensive fabric. Small, token items were purchased as souvenirs to mark an enjoyable day out. Dr Wildman's lecture included a discussion of Christmas advertising campaigns which showed very clearly that the owners of department stores aimed to draw many more customers into their shops, while providing telephone ordering services for those customers who perhaps preferred not to rub shoulders with the less wealthy. She also showed that a number of Christmas shopping features that might be considered more recent developments, such as late-night shopping, did, in fact, originate in the inter-war years. Interestingly, the focus on female customers that was very evident in the advertising material produced by stores in the region seems not to have been such a strong characteristic of similar evidence from London and other southern cities. This was an informative and stimulating lecture drawing on some very interesting evidence, and it formed a suitably seasonal conclusion to the 2009 programme.

*Fiona Pogson*

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**SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Happy New Year!

The Society's subscriptions are due at the beginning of each calendar year: this enables us to run our lecture programme and produce our newsletter throughout the year, and (in normal years) issue *Transactions* at the end of the year or early in the next. Therefore, subscriptions for 2010 are now due **and** subscriptions for 2009 are twelve months **overdue**.

All paid-up members received Vol. 157 (2008) last spring. We hope to dispatch Vol. 158 (2009) shortly. I must therefore ask those of you still adrift to send outstanding subscription a.s.a.p. You could pay the subscription for 2010 at the same time..!

*Personalised reminders had to be sent to many members in autumn 2009. This is a great waste of time and resources. Once again may I say that if it would help you (and us!) to pay by standing order, please ask for a form.*

To make outstanding payments or the current renewal please use the form below but mark it 'renewal'.



Join *The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire* and enjoy the benefits of the annual *Transactions*, lectures, events, the opportunity to use an extensive library, and, as a new member, three free offprints.

**To:** Mr. Simon Hill, Department of History, Liverpool John Moores University, 68 Hope Street, Liverpool L1 9BZ  
e-mail - [s.j.hill@ljmu.ac.uk](mailto:s.j.hill@ljmu.ac.uk)

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'The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire'.

Please send my list of Society Off-Prints, from which I may select three, and details of the special purchase.

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