



THE HISTORIC SOCIETY OF LANCASHIRE & CHESHIRE

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Saturday, 20 May 2017, 2pm.

Z Cars 1839 – Fact and Fictionalisation in the early years of the Liverpool Constabulary Force.

Dr Nick Foggo, Department of History, University of Liverpool.

In the late 1830s policing in Liverpool was transformed to an extent not experienced again till the “Z Cars” era in the 1960s. The new Liverpool Constabulary Force soon established a fine reputation, despite the foibles of many early recruits, and pioneered such modern concepts as crime statistics, cost-benefit analysis and linkage between crime and social

deprivation. Official records and newspaper reports only tell part of the story: in this talk we also look at other contemporary sources, including the satirical memoirs of one of Liverpool's first police constables and the first ever novel about Liverpool life. From this unlikely mix emerges

the extraordinary tale of one very fallible human who tried to make a career in the New Police.

In this issue

Joseph Mayer Special	P 2
June visit to Port Sunlight	P 5
Prizes	P 6

Transactions 2016 Update

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond his control, Dr Andy Gritt has resigned from his position as Editor of Transactions. Council owe him a debt of gratitude for his dedication and hard work on both the current and past volumes.

We are pleased to be able to announce that Dr Alan Crosby has agreed to act as interim editor and is currently finalising volume 165 for publication. Council would like to express their thanks to Dr Crosby for stepping in to complete the volume at such short notice. We apologise to all our members for the unavoidable delay in dispatch and we aim to get the completed volume to you later this year.

Council can also announce that at our recent AGM Dr Bertie Dockerill was appointed as Editor of Volume 166 and he is working to ensure that future volumes will appear more promptly.

Dr Arline Wilson (President)

HSLC Founder Joseph Mayer Special

In this edition of our newsletter we are carrying several pieces relating to one of our founding members – Joseph Mayer. There is a report of a talk about Joseph's life and work as art collector, benefactor and antiquarian by Nicola Scott of the Walker Art Gallery. The talk was attended by several members of the Joseph Mayer Trust from Bebington who have sent in reports about Joseph's many activities on the Wirral and their work to conserve his buildings as a permanent commemoration of his contribution to his adopted home. Bebington is just a short walk from Port Sunlight - so you might like to go there after our June visit.

Joseph Mayer – Collector, Antiquarian, Historic

Joseph Mayer (1803 – 1886) his life, work and collections

A talk by Nicola Scott of the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool

As a nineteen year old Joseph Mayer arrived in Liverpool in 1822. He was the son of a Staffordshire tanner but came to Liverpool as partner with his brother-in-law in a jewellers and goldsmiths business. He was successful and as an accomplished innovator he quickly set up by himself. With the wealth from success he was able to become the collector that he is depicted as in the painting on page 3.

His collections were sometimes ahead of their time, such as collecting Wedgwood pottery in the 1830s – long before anybody else. He also participated in a broad network of collectors and exhibitors who held exhibitions in the Mechanics Institute of Liverpool as well as participating in the 1857 Art Exhibition in Manchester. Over the years he bought the Faussett collection of Anglo-Saxon artefacts, ivory, Majolica pottery, and Roman, Etruscan and early English pottery. Most conspicuous though was his Egyptian collection – he founded the Egyptian Museum in 1852 and used it to display his many collections.

In 1867 Mayer donated his collections to the Museum of Liverpool. Today what remains of this collection can be seen in the Walker Art Gallery. Sadly a lot was lost to bombing in the Second World War.

Of special interest to the Historic Society is that Joseph Mayer was one of our founding members having met other founders such as Abraham Hume and Henry Pigeon in the 1840s. The Society had about 200 members in its early days. Mayer became curator to the Society and later served as its President. Unfortunately none of the society's collection survived WW2. In his time he presented papers to the society including one on 'The history of the Art of Pottery in Liverpool' in 1855 for which he used oral history techniques – not common at that time.

After 40 years in Liverpool Mayer moved to Bebington and took on a new life of community involvement.

Nicola Scott's talk was detailed and well researched, holding everybody's interest throughout. In particular there were many illustrations of the exhibits held in the Walker Art Gallery – so if you need an excuse to go there you could go looking for those exhibits.

Joseph Mayer's Home, Park and Library in Bebington

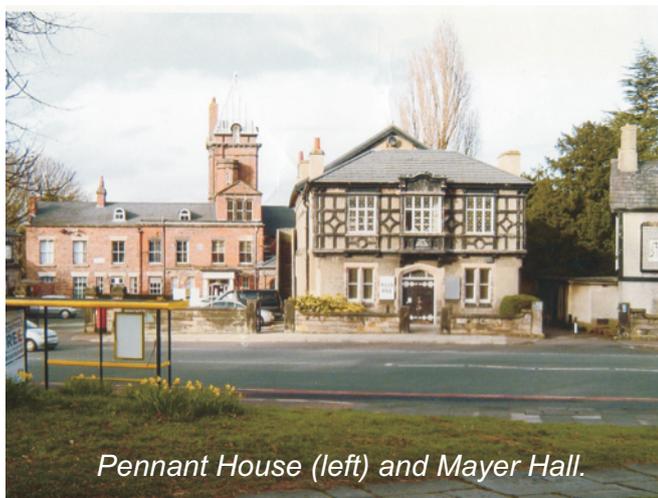
In the late 1850s, Joseph Mayer moved to Rock Ferry, before moving to Bebington to the house he named 'Pennant House', after Thomas Pennant, the traveller and naturalist who he admired greatly.

At this time the economic importance of Liverpool, the opening of the railways, the construction of the New

Liverpool. Joseph Mayer quickly immersed himself into village life. As a member of The Lower Bebington Board he was instrumental in bringing gas and water services to the village; he was involved in founding various sport and recreation clubs. He raised funds for a village hospital and a horticultural society, and allotments were formed on his initiative. In 1866 he established a free library for the people of Bebington.

In 1869, the farmhouse, and five acres of land which adjoined Pennant House, came up for sale, so Joseph Mayer bought them. Within a few months he had created a permanent home for the Free Library which he extended by adding the tower and new reading rooms. He also developed the public parkland that became Mayer Park. It was a facility enjoyed by all, young and old, poor farm labourers and wealthy businessmen.

By 1873, the year of his retirement from his jewellers business, he commissioned plans for the extension of Pennant House, to better accommodate his ever-growing collection of manuscripts, papers, pictures and sculptures. Despite these extensions, Pennant House became too cramped for his collection, so by 1878 he decided to construct a new two storey hall - Mayer Hall. The ground floor would provide for lectures and concerts, and the upper floor would be a gallery in which to exhibit his collection of paintings, artefacts and sculptures.



Pennant House (left) and Mayer Hall.

Chester Road and steam ferryboats on the Mersey, all led to the growth of Bebington village as a dormitory township for many professional and business people working in

Society of Lancashire and Cheshire founder

Maintaining the Hall, Park and Library

The upkeep of the library, hall and parkland was being met totally by Joseph Mayer, but in looking to the future, he decided to establish the Mayer Trust as a registered Charity in 1878 to undertake these tasks. He chaired the Trust up to his death in 1886. He is buried in the graveyard of St Andrew's Church in the village of Bebington. The bequest made to the Mayer Trust soon proved to be insufficient to generate the income needed to meet all of the Trust's running costs, and by 1894, the local Bebington Urban District Council started to contribute towards the costs of the free library. Eventually in 1930, the council took on the full responsibility for the library, hall, museum and parkland, but the Trust retained the responsibility for the annual lectures. These lectures have been delivered annually since 1878 except during first and second world wars and six free lectures are still given today in the months from October to March inclusive. The Trustees choose a varied programme of illustrated lectures to appeal to a wide audience. The printed programme of the six lectures for each season is available in August each year and can be viewed on The Mayer Trust website at www.themayertrust.org.uk or contact 0151 334 8035



Joseph Mayer

Joseph Mayer Community Partnership – saving the buildings for the community

In the early 1970s the library services were transferred to a new building and the Mayer Free Library Building became empty for a short time. In 1986 Mayer Hall was declared surplus to Council need but never sold. By 1996 the Wirral Borough Council sought to make changes, even to sell them. Pennant House was still occupied but Mayer Hall and Free Library buildings had fallen into disrepair.

In 1995 The Mayer Hall (Bebington) Trust was formed to save Mayer Hall and gain an asset transfer from Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council (WMBC). It succeeded in saving the building but by 2013 WMBC had decided that the buildings were to be sold. Members of the local community set up the `The Joseph Mayer Community Partnership`. Their aim was to save and restore Mayer Hall and 65 The Village (known as The Clock Tower and formerly The Mayer Free Library) and negotiate an Asset Transfer back to the Community. They have succeeded in refurbishing Mayer Hall in conjunction with WMBC, returning it by 2017 to full community use.

Last year the Free Library roof was repaired and the building returned to the original floor plan. The Trust hope to ensure full restoration of the Free Library Building as and when funding is raised or becomes available into 2018. Pennant House has been returned back into Council stock again serves as Council Offices. Mayer Park has been added to over the years and continues to be maintained by Wirral Council. 'The Friends of Mayer Park help the Council maintain the park and are restoring important features in the park. They helped to obtain Green Flag status for the Park in 2015.

The Joseph Mayer Community Partnership is always pleased to offer tours of the buildings or the Park, for groups or individuals by arrangement. We could also offer illustrated talks on different aspects of Josephs Mayer's life continuing and sustaining his educational legacy.

Both Joseph Mayer Community Partnership and The Friends of Mayer Park have facebook pages and JMCP a website www.jmcp.org.uk (under reconstruction). Or contact Dennis Boyd our Chairman at dennisboyd1@tiscali.co.uk

Paul Robertson Vice Chairman the Joseph Mayer Community Partnership 07795373838

First Autumn Lecture

Wednesday 20th September 6.30pm

From worthy to glossy: the surprising histories of Cheshire Life and Lancashire Life magazines

Dr Andrew Hobbs, UCLan

Tea, coffee and biscuits available from 6pm

The Life and Times of a Lancashire Georgian Lady

Nelly Weeton (1776-1849), was a prolific writer of letters during the early years of the 19th century, who for a period of some 30 years wrote an identical copy of each letter. Her 'copy' letters, discovered in a number of memorandum books, together with other personal writings in the form of detailed journal entries and autobiographical fragments, were discovered 100 years later in a Wigan second-hand bookshop. Four years ago Wigan Council Archivist, Alex Miller, decided to publish the story of Miss Weeton's life in a single volume. He commissioned local historian, Alan Roby, to undertake the task.

Nelly reveals herself as a formidable woman who loved travel and adventure. Born in Lancaster, she was the daughter of slave ship captain, Thomas Weeton (1747-1782), who was mortally wounded during the American War of Independence. As a result his impoverished widow, Mary, with children Nelly and Thomas, relocated to Up Holland, near Wigan, in 1784.

Nelly's story takes readers on a fascinating and often

shocking journey at a time when women were considered as mere chattels both in the home and in law. Her consummate and passionate writings, reveal a woman who was determined to make the best of her low status and often tragic circumstances. Nelly's penchant for excitement and adventure is rivetingly described in her high-risk 'outside' stagecoach journey to and from London and her lone tours around the Isle-of-Man and North Wales.

Miss Weeton, Governess and Traveller. Published by Wigan Archives. 448 pages of text, plus 16 pages of illustrations, hardback, price £20. ISBN 978-1-5262-0553-7. Available from Amazon and on line at

www.missweetonbook.wordpress.com

and from bookshops to order. Further information from: Alan Roby (Editor), Tel 01695 622022

Mob 07752 284555, Email: alanroby42@gmail.com

Report of October lecture

'The survey of Cheshire commenced by me this day': the practicalities of making 19th century county maps' *Jonathon Peplar, formerly County Archivist of Cheshire*

In this lecture Jonathon Peplar looked at the work of eminent map makers A. Bryant, Christopher Greenwood and William Lloyd Holden. He gave the audience a clear idea of the difficulties involved. In particular the diaries of Holden provide an insight into their work as county maps were created for the whole country between 1817 and 1839.

One thing that made them distinct was that used their own surveys to create the maps. Plagiarism had adversely affected many maps before their time. Another point emphasised was the business plan, the first thing that was needed for any map was subscribers. Canvassers were employed for this by Holden. Only when enough income was available could the work be undertaken – and the search for subscribers could be a continuing task. After this the process involved trig points (a practice first used in 1784), a topographical survey followed by secondary sources. Some of Holden's walks over his mapping area would appear to be too quick for proper notes (and showed a propensity to visit pubs).

Somehow or other this was turned into a successful business and maps were produced – but it felt like the Ordnance Survey had all the advantages.



Join/continue membership of The Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire - enjoy the benefits of the annual Transactions, lectures, events and access to our extensive library.

To: JE Hollinshead, 28 Tewkesbury Close, Liverpool, L25 9RY e-mail: jhollinshead558@btinternet.com

I/We wish to join the HSLC and enclose cheque/postal order for the annual subscription of £16, payable to:- 'Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire' or money transfer to Account: 83199535 Sort Code: 60 05 25.

For new members - Please send my list of Society Off-Prints, from which I may select three.

Signed:

Name and address:

Email:

Historic Society visit – Wednesday, 21 June 2017 Port Sunlight



Port Sunlight is a garden village founded in 1888 by 'Soap King' William Hesketh Lever to house workers at his Sunlight Soap factory nearby. As well as decent and affordable housing, the village provided amenities such as a swimming pool and welfare services for families. There are now over 900 Grade II listed buildings in the community.

Our visit will comprise an hour's walk around the village with Cindy Brown, a Blue Badge Guide, followed by the opportunity to see inside one of the larger, four-bedroomed houses designed for foremen. The house belongs to a member of the Society who has very kindly agreed to open it up for us.

10.30 – 11.30 Walk around Port Sunlight village 11.30 – 12.00 Visit to house in Greendale Road

We will assemble near the Port Sunlight Museum/Shop opposite the Lady Lever Gallery and please be ready to set out on the walk promptly at 10.30. If you want to arrive a bit earlier for coffee, both the Lady Lever Café and the Port Sunlight Museum Cafe open at 10am.

Directions. By train – on the Wirral Line from Liverpool to Ellesmere Port or Chester you will need the Bebington stop rather than Port Sunlight as this is slightly nearer; there is then a walk of about 5 minutes to the meeting place. By road – postcode for Sat Nav is CH62 5EQ. There is ample free parking outside the Lady Lever Art Gallery.

There are several places to lunch locally after the walk, including the cafés in the Art Gallery and Museum. Alternatively, if the weather is fine, you might like to bring your own packed lunch and enjoy the surroundings.

After our visit you will have the opportunity to explore Port Sunlight on your own. There is plenty to see, including the Art Gallery with free entry and the Museum for which there is an admission charge. The South End galleries of the Art Gallery re-opened last year following refurbishment. The Village Trust has been converting one of their holiday homes into a period cottage, which is planned to open at Easter. If it is open on the day of our visit this would give the opportunity to compare two types of housing. Further details will be given nearer the time.

Numbers are limited both for practical reasons and for insurance purposes, so please book promptly. Just complete the attached form and return it to the address given on the form before 12 June. The cost of the visit is £8 per person; please include a cheque for this amount (payable to Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire) when returning your booking form.



PLEASE RETURN SLIP TO:-

Dr J. E. Hollinshead, 28 Tewkesbury Close, Liverpool, L25 9RY

Please book me places at £8 a head on the HSLC's visit to Port Sunlight, 21 June 2017.

I enclose a cheque for £.....

NAME (please print)

ADDRESS

Email for confirmation of booking

OR, please enclose SAE if you want a paper version of the confirmation of booking.

Please note that charges for visits to other museums in Port Sunlight are not included. Bookings will be confirmed about 12 June.

Historic Society Prizes

Higher Education Institutions in the United Kingdom are invited to submit their best undergraduate dissertation and/or Masters dissertation on any aspect of the history of the two historic counties of Lancashire and Cheshire. The dissertations do not have to be from history students and related disciplines are welcome to enter (e.g. historical geography, politics).

Entries should be submitted by the Institution (individual private submissions will not be accepted) in electronic format along with a brief report (also in electronic format) written by the supervisor or examiner to include the final recorded mark for the work. Submissions must be made before the end of December each year and the dissertation must have been submitted to an Institution of Higher Education within the previous 12 months.

Please provide full contact details of the student so that we can notify the prizewinners.

Judging

1. A sub-committee of the Council of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire will draw up a shortlist of entries based on the report of their supervisors/examiner.
2. The sub-committee will adjudicate and offer two prizes subject to clause 3.
3. The Council of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire reserve the right not to award any prizes if there are no suitable submissions.
4. The winners may be invited to submit an article based on their dissertation for possible publication in the Transactions.

Entries should be submitted to: Emeritus Professor John Belchem, Past President of HSLC

Email: j.c.belchem@liv.ac.uk

Report of February Lecture

'The great portion of the scum of society'? Representations of Execution Crowds in the Lancashire Press 1830-1868'.

Dr John Wallis Liverpool Hope University

Dr Wallis' underlying themes in this lecture and his recent research seems to be that 1) the desire of the authorities in the mid 19th Century to shock and awe the population into not being criminals was subverted by the masses who saw executions as an excuse for a fair, a day trip or a picnic, 2) possibly behaviour was not as bad up north as it was in London and 3) (his main theme) the press, though divided on the question of public executions, mostly gave neutral reporting that was not party aligned.

The behaviour that was complained about was the presence of the wrong sort of people - women and kids - and the non reverential behaviour (particularly by young men) of larking about and singing. The Liverpool Mercury alone was regularly critical of behaviour which might have reflected the abolitionist view of the paper's founder and used bad behaviour to support its case. However Dr Wallis suggested that behaviour in London was not that much worse - it was exaggerated by public execution abolitionists.

One possible conclusion that could be construed was that the largely middle class readerships of the newspapers at that time needed reassuring that they were better than the hoi polloi. Though attendances at the actual events would not match this view.